AN

ESSAY

ON

THE REVENUES

OF

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

..... " Si quid novisti rectiùs istis,
" Candidus imperti; si non, his utere mecùm."

HOR.

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MDCCXCV.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

THE FRIENDS

OF

OUR EXCELLENT

CONSTITUTION IN CHURCH & STATE,

THE FOLLOWING ESSAY

IS

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

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ON

THE REVENUES

OF

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Revenues of the Church of England have been a ſubject of frequent enquiry. Of late years, they have more particularly excited the attention of the public, having been openly and directly attacked, by ſeveral artful, unfair, and violent publications, as well as by other more indirect means, equally partial, inſidious and unjuſt.

But, on a point of ſo much importance, as the neceſſary ſupport of the Eſtabliſhment of the Church of England, few of thoſe, who have written ſo dogmatically, or talked ſo confidently, are qualified to decide---Hurried away by miſinformation, paſſion, prejudice, or intereſt, they entirely diſregard the broad and generous principles of reaſon and equity, and the more clear and expreſs declarations of poſitive law---And, though their aſſertions are not leſs notorious for miſinformation than confidence, yet, being delivered in an authoritative tone, and impreſſed with a ſpecious, and a kind of impoſing dignity, they are received and cheriſhed by thoſe of ſimilar inclinations, as truths which are wholly incontrovertible.

However, though ſuch ſuperficial writers and declaimers may flatter themſelves, that their opinions are ſupported by the ſoundeſt arguments, and reſt upon the firmeſt

firmeſt baſis, the following Eſſay, it is to be hoped, will open to them ſome ſources of intelligence, and poſſibly of conviction, of which they may hitherto have had no idea. And, even to thoſe who may have lately taken up the ſubject, and conſidered it more extenſively, in a moral and political point of view, it may, perhaps, ſtill ſuggeſt ſomething, which may have either eſcaped their reſearches, or not experienced their minute inveſtigation.

I ſhall eſteem my labours amply repaid, if they ſhould prove the happy means of calming the agitated mind of the public, towards the Miniſters of the Eſtabliſhed Religion and our Church Government, and, more eſpecially, of rendering the intercourſe, between the Payers and Receivers of Eccleſiaſtical Revenues, more eaſy and ſatisfactory, till ſuch time as, according to the fond expectations of theſe declaimers againſt them, Parliament ſhall intervene,

and change the preſent mode of providing for the Miniſters of the National Religion, to another leſs objectionable, and more agreeable to both parties---

It is an event, theſe declaimers tell us, which the exiſting generation of the Laity and Clergy may live to ſee: for, if the late-eſtabliſhed Board of Agriculture ſhould, upon their further enquiry and cloſe examination, deem an alteration neceſſary in the payment of the chief part of Eccleſiaſtical Revenues, namely, Tithes ---without doubt, the Legiſlature of the kingdom would, they preſume, lend a willing and attentive ear to their recommendation---And, it is alſo an event, they go on to ſay, to which many of the Clergy look forward with a pleaſing and even anxious expectation, eſpecially thoſe, who have already experienced conteſts with their pariſhioners, or ſuch as have choſen to forego their juſt dues, and to give up their

their reaſonable and legal rights, rather than, by entering into parochial diſputes, to run the hazard, as it often happens, of rendering ineffectual their virtuous efforts for the ſpiritual improvement of their pariſhioners---

They go on ſtill further to maintain, that the Miniſters of Religion ſhould be wholly detached from all *temporal* concerns, and that, if any change took place in the preſent mode of providing for thoſe of the Eſtabliſhed Church, they ought not, for that reaſon, to be allowed a *landed* compenſation in lieu of Tithes; as, if ſuch ſhould be the exchange, (excluſive of the evils, to be derived to the public, from throwing ſo large a quantity of land into mortmain, and individually to the Clergy, from their becoming ſubject to all the various inconveniences and burthens of a landed property,*) the Eſtabliſhed Clergy would,

* See, *The Letter of* the excellent *Biſhop Barrington to the Clergy*

would, in general, they ſay, be reduced to the rank of farmers---they would be almoſt unavoidably neceſſitated to mix with thoſe of ſimilar occupations---they would thereby be gradually leſs eſteemed by their pariſhioners---would become of leſs and leſs importance in the eyes of the world, and, in the end, be entirely diſregarded---and, from being accuſtomed to diſregard them, men would, from an aſſociation of ideas, ſoon learn to ſlight and deſpiſe the Eſtabliſhed Religion itſelf.

Theſe are conſequences, which the declaimers againſt Tithes themſelves, and our modern church reformers, are very ſtrenuous in inſiſting upon. And, moreover, ſo far are they from wiſhing to ſee

of the Dioceſe of Sarum, in 1790—in which his Lordſhip, with a very different motive from that which actuates the adverſaries of the Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhment and its Revenues, expatiates on the diſadvantages which muſt eventually accrue to the Clergy, by the commutation of the right of Tithe for Land. See alſo, *Obſervations on a General Commutation of Tithes for Land, or a Corn Rent, in* 1782—wherein the evil conſequences of a landed commutation are moſt forcibly diſplayed.

any

any change adopted, which may tend to ſecularize the National Clergy, by forcing them into the world and its concerns, that (ſuppoſing any alteration to be made in the mode of their preſent proviſion, by a fixed and permanent income aſſigned to them in lieu of Tithes,) they maintain, that it would be very neceſſary to reſtrain them, even from collecting ſuch future revenue, whatever might be the appointed ſource of it. Nor, would the Eſtabliſhed Clergy, in their opinion, be placed by any kind of change in a leſs eligible ſituation, than they now are; provided ſuch a mode ſhould be adopted, as would ſecure to them a proviſion equivalent to their preſent one ariſing from Tithes, and which would always bear a relative proportion to the neceſſaries of life; but, on the contrary, according to them, the Eſtabliſhed Clergy, by the adoption of ſuch a plan, would rank more independently in Society, and that,

if their conduct was at all times conformable to their ſacred profeſſion, their uſe and influence would become ſtill more beneficial and extenſive.

And, under theſe ſpecious pretences and great appearances of candour, it is artfully inſinuated, that the Clergy do not at preſent poſſeſs the influence they ought to have, nor, as yet, fully anſwer the ends of their inſtitution. But, it may, I hope, without any preſumption, be ſaid, that they are not excelled by the Clergy of any other nation, or by the Miniſters of Diſſenting Congregations in this, in regard to their perſonal influence and example, as well as their literary accompliſhments. The tenor of their conduct, in general, is allowed to be irreproachable, if not ornamental to chriſtianity; it is manly, candid, mild and condeſcending to men of all perſuaſions, and as far removed from intolerance and bigotry, as from lukewarmneſs and indifference.

It

It is aſtoniſhing to think, from what ſource the ill-will and averſion in ſo many, againſt our excellent Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhment, ſhould originate---and why the Revenues of the National Clergy ſhould be a ſubject of ſo much diſſatisfaction and complaint; ſince the poſſeſſors of them are, in their individual capacities, far from being placed in a ſituation to create envy. And, if they themſelves are, for the moſt part, not deſirous of any alteration whatever, but are eaſy and ſatisfied with the preſent ſtate of their revenues, (however ſome few of them may feel inconveniences ariſing from it,) there can be no good and ſufficient reaſon, why they ſhould be diſturbed in the peaceable enjoyment of a very moderate competency on the whole, chiefly to gratify diſcontented, reſtleſs, and turbulent ſpirits of a different perſuaſion, or thoſe of no religious perſuaſion at all, who, under the oſtenſible motive of bene-

benefiting ſociety, have no other object in view, but to benefit and aggrandize themſelves.

It hath been the conſtant practice of modern ſtate quacks and empirical reformers, to attack any form of Government they diſapprove of, through the ſides of its National Religious Eſtabliſhment. And, to enter into and overthrow this ſtrong hold, they begin, by ſecretly prejudicing the minds of the people againſt their Clergy;---by ſuggeſting the mode of their maintenance, as oppreſſive and injurious;---by repreſenting it to be enormous, if not, wholly unneceſſary;---then, by more openly pronouncing the Clergy to be undeſerving of it, as being many of them inattentive to their profeſſional duties, and diſſolute in their lives;---they, afterwards, declaim againſt Religious Eſtabliſhments in general, and the National One in particular, as the very worſt that ever exiſted,

exiſted, in point of doctrine, uſages and government, and that it is anti-chriſtian; ---having proceeded thus far, they make no ſcruple to queſtion, and even to deny the truth of Religion itſelf, and to introduce in its ſtead, and to ſpread, progreſſively, the baneful tenets of Infidelity, Deiſm, and Atheiſm---And, when they find the body of a nation, to be freed from every ſenſe of perſonal and ſocial duty ariſing from religious impreſſions, and ready for every evil work to which the corruption of human nature may incite, or they, their more artful adviſers and abettors, may inſtigate them---they flatter themſelves, by a train of proceedings equally inſidious and baſe, to ſucceed in overturning forms of government, however wiſely eſtabliſhed, or improved by the wiſdom and experience of ages.

I do not heſitate a moment to aſſert, that, if the Civil Conſtitution of this country

country ſhould ever fatally ſuffer from ſuch internal foes, it would be preceded by an attack upon our Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhment. "Religion and Law," as ſpeaks the *Preface to Croke's Reports, temp. Eliz.* "do ſo ſtand together, and ſo mutually "uphold each other, being concentered "in their original and end, both coming "from God and tending to God; that, as "Religion and Law were given to make "good men and good members of Society, "hence it is, that where Religion doth "find a due regard and a conſcientious "practice, and the Law a willing ſubmiſ-"ſion and a chearful obedience, there, if "any where in the world, the Prince will "be glorious, and the People happy." Indeed, the Civil and Eccleſiaſtical intereſts of this kingdom are ſo cloſely united---there is that Alliance between Church and State--that they muſt ſtand or fall together; what is the proſperity and life of the one,

one, muſt be the proſperity and life of the other; and, what is the decay and death of the one, muſt be the decay and death of the other.

" The Monarchy of England," according to the *Preface to Clarendon's Hiſtory of the Rebellion*, "is not now capable of being " ſupported, but upon the principles of " the Church of England; from whence " it will be very natural to conclude, that " the preſerving them both firmly united " together, is the likelieſt way for your " Majeſty to reign over your ſubjects"--- And, " the Religion, by law eſtabliſhed, " is ſuch a vital part of the govern- " ment, ſo thoroughly woven and inter- " mixed into every branch of it, that " generally men look upon it as a good " part of it too; ſince that, and the Go- " vernment of the Church, is ſecured to " them by the ſame proviſions; ſo that it " ſeems, that, next to treaſon againſt your " ſacred

" ſacred perſon, an invaſion upon the " Church ought to be watched and pre- " vented by thoſe who have the honour to " be entruſted in the public adminiſtra- " tion, with the ſtricteſt care and dili- " gence, as the beſt way to preſerve your " Majeſty's perſon and government, in " their juſt dignity and authority."

And, it hath been held by the celebrated *Lord Lyttleton, in his ſpeech on the Jew-Bill, in* 1753, that " our Church and State " form but one ſyſtem: whatever hurts " the Church, hurts the State; whatever " weakens the credit of the Governors of " the Church, takes away from the Civil " Power a part of its ſtrength, and ſhakes " the whole Conſtitution."

It is, at all times, neceſſary to give men juſt notions of their civil, moral, and religious duty; but it is more particularly ſo, when attempts are made (by miſleading their underſtandings, and intereſting their paſſions,)

paſſions,) to turn them aſide from the paths of Religion, of Virtue, and Happineſs, into the labyrinths of Error, Perplexity, and Miſery. At ſuch times---and no one can doubt but that I allude to attempts of this kind lately made in this kingdom---the defence and ſupport of Religion, and of the true intereſts of Society, become the common cauſe of all; but it is more eſpecially incumbent on the Clergy to vindicate the doctrines of our Holy Religion, and the excellence of our Eſtabliſhed National Church---

To this they are moſt ſolemnly bound, by their profeſſional engagements, and ſhould they not ſtand forth in the defence and juſtification of them---if they do not in time oppoſe a torrent, which may make head againſt, and overwhelm, both Church and State---it may be in vain to attempt it, when the public mind ſhall have become, by degrees, too far alienated from their re-

gard

gard to either---And, if they patiently ſuffer their Faith to be denied, their Profeſſion to be vilified, and their Rights to be diſputed, they will moſt deſervedly bring upon themſelves the diſ-eſteem, if not the contempt, of the public---Men of little reflection, perhaps, even thoſe of conſiderable information, will be tempted to think, that the Clergy do not endeavour to do juſtice to the cauſe they have undertaken, as well as juſtice to themſelves, becauſe they have no ſufficient ground of defence; or, having neither the ability, ſpirit, nor inclination to exert themſelves, to look upon them as unworthy of the National Regard.

It is, therefore, more eſpecially, incumbent on the Clergy, to draw forth their ſtores of argumentative and legal knowledge at this time, when the Doctrines and the Eſtabliſhment of the National Church, are, either openly or ſecretly, impugned

pugned on all ſides,---by ſome, who would annihilate both of them, together with the Civil Conſtitution of the kingdom,---by others, who would aboliſh the Eccleſiaſtical, but retain the Civil Eſtabliſhment, with ſome of their ſophiſticated improvements,---by others, who are averſe to the Hierarchy, but approve of its doctrines,---and by others, who wiſh well to the Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhments, though they object to ſome particular parts in each. And, let not the Clergy be lulled into a ſtate of inattention, or deluded into a paſſive and criminal acquieſcence, by the plauſible and alluring profeſſions even of thoſe, who, (though, indeed, they aim at alterations in Church and State,---the commutation or abolition of Tithes, or the melioration of the Civil and Eccleſiaſtical forms of Government,---) pretend to be ſtill ſincerely deſirous, that the Conſtitution of both ſhould be preſerved, and that

the Crown and Religion ſhould continue to receive ſuch dignified and ample ſupport, as ſhould inſure all requiſite power, influence and reſpect---

" Timeo——et Dona ferentes."

But, the preſent days, in which ſchiſm and hereſy are ſo openly avowed, and in which a ſpirit of faction and ſedition hath ſpread through the land,---the preſent days of philoſophy (---or, as they are affectedly called, of ſuperior light and information, in which the foundations and juſtifiability of even limited Monarchies, and the neceſſity of all Religious Eſtabliſhments, and, with them, of all Religion itſelf, are both diſputed and denied---) call not only upon the Clergy, but upon every ſincere Chriſtian, every honeſt man, every loyal ſubject, every friend to his country, to ſtand forth in the defence of the Conſtitution and Eſtabliſhed Religion,---and, as good ſervants in Church

and

and State, whether of the Clergy or Laity, to expoſe all artful and dangerous inſinuations, to reſiſt all hoſtile and deep-laid deſigns againſt them, and to illuſtrate, as far as they are able, the beauty, propriety and advantages of our excellent Conſtitution in Church and State, under which we enjoy every ſolid and ſubſtantial bleſſing, which can be derived to man in a ſtate of civil ſociety.

But my attempt, in the following Eſſay, will be confined to theſe points only, namely, to ſhew,

I. *That the Clergy of the Church of England have a Natural, Precedented and Legal Right to the Revenues with which they are endowed---*

II. *That, though theſe Revenues may, collectively, appear large, they afford a very moderate Competency to the many Thouſands*

ſands whoſe Subſiſtence depends upon them---And,

III. *That theſe Revenues, particularly the Part of them ariſing from Tithes, are neither burthenſome to the Individual, nor injurious to the Public.*

AN

ESSAY

ON

THE REVENUES

OF

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

SECTION I.

"THAT the Clergy of the Church of "England have a Natural, Pre-"cedented, and Legal Right to the Re-"venues with which they are endowed," will more particularly and clearly appear, ---from the concurrent Opinion and Practice of the Ancients,---from the Polity of the Jews, inſtituted by God himſelf,---and from the Poſitive Laws of this Kingdom.

It is evident from the teſtimony of ancient hiſtory, that, in every nation, the exiſtence of ſome ſuperior and ſuperintending Power hath been always acknowledged,---that, as a neceſſary conſequence of this acknowledgment, it hath been judged, as conſtantly, expedient to pay it ſome kind of worſhip or adoration,---that, in order thereto more effectually, certain perſons, under different names in different nations, have been ſet apart to inſpect and celebrate the peculiar worſhip of every ſtate,---that theſe perſons, ſo appointed, have been always particularly taken care of by the ſtate in which they lived, having been dignified by divers titles and privileges, and maintained at the public expence, or by revenues expreſsly appropriated to that purpoſe,---and, that the political and religious ſyſtems of every ſtate have been, at all times, intimately connected with, and mutually ſupported by, each other.

Theſe

Theſe are truths, which cannot fail of forcibly arreſting the attention of every one, who is in the leaſt converſant with the profane* hiſtorians of antiquity. The numerous paſſages, in illuſtration and confirmation of them, with which thoſe writers abound, would, if collected together, form a very large and copious volume,---and they would deeply impreſs the reader's mind, with the idea of a God, the neceſſity of worſhipping him, and the rational and ſtrict obligation of every ſtate, to honour and ſupport their Eſtabliſhed Religion and its Miniſters:---But, it would lead me too far from my chief deſign, to enter further into them. I ſhall, therefore, confine myſelf to what relates more immediately to the practice of the ancients, in appropri-

* The ſacred hiſtorian's authority is here deſignedly omitted; as the application of the particulars recorded by him, in relation to the ſubject in diſcuſſion, before the promulgation of the Moſaic law, will more properly precede the conſideration of "The "Polity of the Jews, inſtituted by God himſelf," and will anſwer the purpoſe of a preface or introduction to it, and to the ſubſequent practice of the chriſtian world.

ating a portion of their ſubſtance to the honour of their Gods, and thereby ſupporting the Religious Eſtabliſhment of their country.

THAT the Phenicians, a very ancient nation, were accuſtomed to pay tithes, (though in what proportion does not appear,) may be fairly deduced from the practice of the Carthaginians, a Phenician colony---Juſtin tells us, that "They were "accuſtomed to ſend their tithes or offer- "ings to Tyre, by one commiſſioned for "that very purpoſe, and cloathed in coſtly "and ſacred attire."---And Diodorus Siculus adds, that "At a certain time, when "being greatly diſtreſſed in war, and ap- "prehenſive of having incurred the anger "of a Phenician God, by their neglect, "during their great temporal proſperity, "to tranſmit to him the uſual tithe of all "their gains,---being humbled by their "misfor-

" misfortunes, and brought to repentance,
" they ſent it accordingly." And the cuſtom of paying tithes, amongſt the Arabian and Ethiopian nations, may be alſo deduced from an injunction in their laws, that " No frankincenſe or cinnamon
" ſhould be ſold or bought, till the tithes
" of them ſhould have been duly paid to
" the Prieſts of their reſpective Gods."

Though Herodotus ſeems diſinclined to ſpeak fully of the religious rites and inſtitutions of the Egyptians, he nevertheleſs tells us, that " The Egyptian prieſthood
" was very honourably diſtinguiſhed, and
" poſſeſſed of many and great advantages;
" and he particularly mentions, that they
" were not obliged to conſume any part
" of their domeſtic property, being fur-
" niſhed daily with a moiety of the ſacred
" viands ready dreſſed, and with a large
" and daily allowance of other food and
" wine,---and, that they were endowed

" with

" with a landed property, free from all " taxes:" which circumſtance of the Egyptian prieſthood being endowed with a landed property, is confirmed by a paſſage in holy ſcripture (Gen. xlvii. 22.); in which, ſpeaking of the conſequences of the famine in the land of Egypt, it is ſaid of Joſeph, " Only the land of the Prieſts " bought he not: for the Prieſts had a " portion aſſigned them of Pharaoh, and " did eat their portion which Pharaoh " gave them; wherefore they ſold not " their lands."

THE Greeks are the moſt ancient people, of whom we have any particular or ſatisfactory information. They were the moſt learned and poliſhed nation of the times in which they flouriſhed, and gradually ſpread their cuſtoms and manners over a very great part of Aſia; and, therefore, we may conclude, that, in giving a

view

view of their religious uſages, we give a view alſo of thoſe of the contemporary and contiguous Aſiatics.

The Greeks are uſually allowed to have followed the more ancient nations, eſpecially the Egyptians, in many of their rites and cuſtoms in matters of religion. Amongſt others, moſt probably, that of conſecrating to the Gods a portion of all ſpoils taken in war; and with which cuſtom, they might have found connected, or to which they might have added from their own natural ſuggeſtions, the practice of appropriating to religious purpoſes, a portion of divers parts at firſt, and, in proceſs of time, of all their ſubſtance.

In general and comprehenſive terms, one author ſays, that "They (the Greeks) "paid the tithe of ſpoils taken in war;"---A ſecond, that "It was a cuſtom to pay "the tithe of their gains;"---And a third, more expreſsly, that "They ſent to Delos "annually

" annually the tithe of corn, under the " name of firſt-fruits, and in the propor- " tion of a tenth part:" which may be ſaid to have been obſerved, in conformity to that moſt ancient law of Triptolemus, " To honour the Gods with their fruits," ---and which law was afterwards renewed by Draco, and, in a decree never to be repealed, explained to conſiſt, " In worſhip- " ping the Gods every year, according to " men's eſtates, with firſt-fruits, and of- " ferings of wine."

The Athenians accounted for the tithe of property, even when it was confiſcated to the public treaſury, as well as of their own goods or private property. And it may be reaſonably ſuppoſed, that it was uſual to pay the tithe of mines, from reading, that the failure of the mines of a certain people, who had neglected to pay the tithe of them to the Gods, according to their former cuſtom, was attributed

tributed to the divine diſpleaſure. And, further, it is moſt probable, that a portion of the profits, acquired by trade and commerce, was appropriated to the honour of the Gods; as we are expreſsly informed, that the merchants, of a particular city, conſecrated a tithe, or portion, of their gains. Moreover, a very remarkable inſtance occurs of a temple, with an altar, being erected out of the produce of ſome ſpoils taken in war, and of its being endowed with land adjoining to it, and with the tithe, or due portion, of the cattle, fed in the ſacred paſtures, or taken in hunting.

It would be very eaſy to draw together a multiplicity of paſſages, in further confirmation of the practice of the Greeks and Aſiatic ſtates, in reſpect to the honouring of their Gods with a certain defined portion, of all public, and, generally ſpeaking, of all private property:---

the

the conſtant obſervance of which, was in perfect agreement with their opinion, as they eſteemed it a moſt peculiar and obligatory act of Religion. And the influence of the opinion was ſo great and prevalent, that the plundering of a rich and flouriſhing city was prevented, under the idea of the ſacredneſs of the portion due to the Gods, which, it would have been impoſſible to have aſcertained, if the city had been given up to the pillage of the victorious ſoldiers. And, as an additional proof of its being regarded in the light of an eſſential and religious duty, may be adduced the information of an ancient writer, who tells us of the utter deſtruction of a very irreligious people, in an early age of the world, on account of their having paid no firſt-fruits to the Gods, which, he particularly ſays, they ought to have done.

Laſtly, it ſeems, that, amongſt the Athenians, the civil magiſtrate had the power

power of inflicting puniſhment for the non-payment of theſe portions, tenths or tithes:---moſt certainly, the detention of them was looked upon as ſacrilegious, and the detainer of them with the utmoſt abhorrence; inſomuch, that, when the Greeks would deſcribe a very wicked man, they called him by an expreſſive proverbial phraſe, ſignifying, that he ate of ſuch things, as had not been ſanctified or rendered holy, by firſt conſecrating a part of them to the Gods.

THE Romans follow, as the next moſt celebrated nation of antiquity. And, concerning their opinion and practice of paying tithes, we have the moſt expreſs teſtimony, that "They offered to their Gods "all ſorts of tithes, or tithes of all ſorts of "things." This general aſſertion might be more particularly illuſtrated and confirmed, by a detail of the numerous paſſages in

in point, from the writers of Roman affairs; but it would be too tedious to collect, and dwell upon them. For, it is undeniably clear, that the Romans paid the tithes of all ſpoils taken in war, and annually of the profits of their eſtates and merchandize,---that, whether high or low, rich or poor, they obſerved the practice, as a neceſſary duty of religion,---and, as it is evident from certain expreſſions, moſt commonly accompanying the mention of ſuch events, that they were led to that practice, by the examples and cuſtoms of their anceſtors.

It is true, that, amongſt both Greeks and Romans, the inſtances of conſecrating to the Gods an holy portion, are more frequent in relation to ſpoils taken in war, than to other kinds of property. But this may be accounted for, by recollecting, that, as in the earlier ages of the world, mankind ſeem to have lived in an almoſt

continued

continued ſtate of warfare,---therefore, all events and leading traits of the wars they were engaged in, or which were connected with them, are brought forward and appear, as the moſt prominent features in ancient hiſtory. So that, it is juſt and neceſſary to remark here, that, notwithſtanding the inſtances of paying tithes of ſpoils taken in war, rather than of other things, oftener occur in the hiſtories of the Greeks, Romans and other nations of antiquity,---yet there are, nevertheleſs, a very great number of paſſages, which are expreſsly declaratory of the payment of tithes, out of almoſt every thing the ancients poſſeſſed, whether in peace or war, ---and, from the cleareſt and moſt poſitive information, the tenth was the accuſtomed part, to be paid out of either public or private property.

Theſe tithes, or ſacred portions, either out of ſpoils taken in war, or out of all

other public or private property, were uſually conſecrated, according to national cuſtom or perſonal inclination, to the ſervice of any God or Goddeſs in particular, or to all the Gods in general; though, indeed, amongſt the Greeks and Aſiatic nations, Apollo was ſo greatly favoured in this reſpect, that he was emphatically ſtiled, the Tithe-Taker or Receiver, or Crowned with Tithes; and, amongſt the Romans, Hercules was ſo highly eſteemed above all their numerous hoſt of Gods, that Hercules' portion was uſed to ſignify, and was ſynonymous with, the tenth part, in civil as well as religious concerns.

Such was the opinion of the ancients concerning the payment of tithes, and ſuch the practice which they grounded upon it, ---as appears, from the hiſtory of thoſe nations of antiquity, of whom we have any particular account. And, no doubt, had

we

we equal information reſpecting all the kingdoms of former days, we ſhould find the ſame opinion and practice to have univerſally prevailed.

As the origin of them hath never been ſatisfactorily diſcovered, it hath been uſually inferred, that they took their riſe from the light of reaſon and nature:---that, what was at firſt, poſſibly, merely local and optional, in proceſs of time, became a general cuſtom, and the obſervance of it moſt ſcrupulouſly regarded, ſo as to cauſe all thoſe who neglected it, to be eſteemed as profane, irreligious and the worſt of men:---and, that, at length, it is moſt probable, that a practice, which might have been originally founded in and agreeable to right reaſon, was ſanctioned by civil authority, and that, thenceforth, the ancients regularly conſecrated to the Gods, a portion of all ſpoils taken in war, and annually of corn, wine and other

fruits of the earth, and, as it ſeems, of all profits derived from mines, trade and commerce, if not, of all public and private property whatever.*

IF, then, in the days of Gentile ſuperſtition, the light of reaſon and nature could lead men to honour their Gods with a portion of their ſubſtance, which was expended in the celebration of their National Religious Worſhip, and in the maintenance of the Prieſts employed therein,---ſurely,

* To avoid the parade of learning, and to render this part of the Eſſay plain and intelligible to the moſt common underſtandings, a very conciſe and general view only of the opinions and practice of the ancients hath been given above; and, not to diſtract the attention of the reader, by continually referring to the paſſages introduced, the references have been all omitted in their proper places, together with the controverſies in relation to ſome of the quotations. Thoſe, who are more curious and inquiſitive, may ſatisfy themſelves in both particulars, by having recourſe to the ſeveral *Treatiſes on Tithes*, by *Scaliger*, *Selden*, *Tildeſly*, *Carleton*, *Mountagu*, *Comber*, *Leſlie*, and *Prideaux*, and to *Spencer de Legibus Hebræorum*: theſe writers have fully enlarged on the payment of tithes, under the Gentile ſuperſtition, the Moſaic law, and the Chriſtian diſpenſation; and, of their writings, I have freely availed myſelf throughout the preſent chapter.

all

all Chriſtian ſtates are equally bound, by the ſame dictates, to appropriate a part of their ſubſtance, to the honour and ſervice of the God they adore, and to the ſupport of the Miniſters attendant on his worſhip.

The dignity of human nature, and the ſuperiority of the light of reaſon, are, amongſt all others, the moſt prevailing topics of modern converſation; the former is extolled and magnified, as being little lower than that of angels,---and the latter is compared, and almoſt equalled to, the voice of inſpiration! Now, as we cannot ſuppoſe, that, three, four or five thouſand years ago, there was any inferiority in the innate dignity and ſtrength of the human powers, but that reaſon and nature have been equally powerful and impreſſive in every age,---We muſt allow the Gentiles or ancients to have been guided by juſt principles, in ſetting apart a portion of their ſubſtance, for the ſupport of their

National

National Religious Eſtabliſhments.---- Whence it follows, that, if the light of reaſon and nature directed them into the true path of moral, civil, and religious rectitude, in ſupporting and maintaining their National Religion and its Miniſters,---the Clergy of the Church of England have, by parity of reaſoning and ſituation, a claim to a proviſion,---and, therefore, "A *Na-*
"*tural* Right to the Revenues with which
"they are endowed."

SECTION II.

THAT the Clergy of the Church of England, have a *Precedented* Right to the Revenues with which they are endowed, will appear, "From the Polity of the Jews, "inſtituted by God himſelf." But, as a preface or introduction to the conſideration of it, I ſhall previouſly give a conciſe view of the chief paſſages in the ſacred writings, which refer to the Patriarchs' honouring God and his Miniſters, by the appropriation of a part of their ſubſtance to the purpoſes of religion.

THE ſacrifices of Cain and Abel, preſent us with the firſt inſtances of conſecrating to God a portion of the fruits of the earth, as well as of animals; and, to the performance of this act of public worſhip, we may

juſtly preſume they were led, if not by ſome declaration of God's will, at leaſt, by the light of nature,---the warm and grateful feelings of their hearts, their ſenſe of moral rectitude, ſuggeſting to them the propriety and obligation of offering unto God, a portion of the good things, with which his bounty alone had bleſſed them. And, though the hiſtory of Cain and Abel does not expreſsly mention the proportion which they gave unto God, yet it hath been ſtrongly inſiſted on, by numerous Jewiſh and Chriſtian commentators on the paſſage that it was a determined and very conſiderable portion, and that the rejection of Cain's ſacrifice proceeded from his having, through covetouſneſs or infidelity, not offered the beſt in its kind, or the due proportion of his increaſe.

In the hiſtory of Abraham, who was peculiarly favoured by God, we are informed of his honouring him, in the perſon

ſon of Melchizedec, (who was a Prieſt as well as a King,) with a portion of ſpoils taken in war, and, according to many celebrated writers, of *all* his ſubſtance alſo. This Melchizedec, to whom Abraham paid tithes, is called in the Old Teſtament, the Prieſt of the Moſt High God, and is deſcribed in the New, as the expreſs type of Chriſt and his Prieſthood; which Prieſthood, as far as relates to the praiſing God, and praying unto him for his people, being devolved by Chriſt in theſe words (---" as my Father hath ſent me, even ſo " ſend I you"---) upon his Apoſtles, and by them upon the Chriſtian Prieſthood, it is reaſonable to infer, that, as the Melchizedecal Prieſthood was typical of Chriſt's and that eſtabliſhed by him, therefore, the Chriſtian Prieſthood or Miniſtry is entitled to the rights, enjoyed by the Patriarchal or Melchizedecal Prieſthood.

From Jacob's vow, may be collected the moſt poſitive and explicit determination of the

the portion to be given unto God,---that it ſhould be a *Tenth* of all, with which God ſhould bleſs him; and, though it does not in fact appear, that Jacob ever fulfilled this vow of paying tithes, or tenths, of all his ſubſtance, yet a firm perſuaſion of his performing it, may be grounded on the generally allowed pious and good character of the Patriarch. (See, *Patrick's Commentary*, on Gen. iv. 3. and on Gen. xxviii. 20. ---and alſo, *Comber*, *Leſlie*, and *Prideaux on Tithes*, by whom the preceding paſſages in ſacred hiſtory are more fully illuſtrated.)

And, in addition to theſe inſtances from holy ſcripture, of particular Patriarchs having honoured God and his Miniſters, by the appropriation of a part of their ſubſtance to religious uſes, might be ſubjoined the teſtimony of the various Jewiſh writers on the Pentateuch, who unanimouſly affirm, that, from tradition, all the Patriarchs liberally gave tithes to the Lord.

Since,

Since, then, it appears from the opinions and practice of the Gentile world, as recorded in profane hiſtory, and of the Patriarchs, as recorded in ſcripture, and ſupported by the traditionary teſtimony of the Jews, that there was an univerſal cuſtom of appropriating a part of every man's ſubſtance to the honour of the Divine Being, for the ſupport of Religion and its attendant Miniſters,---and that the portion, uſually conſecrated to theſe purpoſes, was the Tenth Part, in general, of all property, though ſometimes confined to certain ſpecies only,---it may be aſked,---Whence did this religious cuſtom itſelf, and the peculiar obſervance of it, by the appropriation of a *tenth* part in preference to all other proportions, originate?

If it be allowed, that, from the light of reaſon and nature, men might have been induced to honour the Divine Being with

with a part of their ſubſtance, as a grateful acknowledgment that all proceeded from him, yet ſtill the greateſt difficulty remains to be accounted for,--- Whence did it come to paſs, that men, ſo univerſally, conſecrated a *tenth* part?--- a queſtion, which hath always perplexed, and eventually foiled, every attempt to anſwer it. Indeed, both points of enquiry are too deeply involved in difficulty and obſcurity, to be fathomed by the line of human underſtanding: both cuſtoms have been found eſtabliſhed amongſt ſo many nations, of different manners and different religions, and in parts of the world abſolutely preventing the poſſibility of any intercourſe with each other, that the conſonance of all nations, in the obſervance of them, could not have ariſen from the tendency of human nature to imitation. And, even ſuppoſing, that ſuch an univerſal agreement did proceed

from

from the adoption of each other's cuſtoms, and that there hath been, at all times, a communication between the various nations of the world,---yet,---Where was the practice, with the peculiar mode of obſerving it, firſt eſtabliſhed,---and,---From what ſource did they firſt originate?

Thus, do we return again to the original difficulty,---to the ſolution of which, the ſtrength of human reaſon is unequal. Nor, does there remain any other method of ſolving it, but by aſſigning the origin of the cuſtom, and the peculiar obſervance of it, to ſome unrecorded revelation made to Adam, and by him and his deſcendants delivered down to poſterity: and it is clear, that revelations of God's will were made to the Patriarchs, which, though not recorded, are occaſionally referred to, in ſcripture.

This is not only a moſt rational, but the moſt probable ſolution; and it is alſo

ſupported

ſupported by certain paſſages in the holy writings, previous to, and at the giving of, the Moſaic law, which ſuppoſe and imply the cuſtom of paying tithes, as having been long, and (it is preſumable) divinely eſtabliſhed. And it is worthy of obſervation, that, as in all the various ordinances of the Moſaic law concerning tithes, the injunctions are much more frequently directed to the *manner of paying* them, than to the *ordaining the payment* of them, it amounts to a preſumptive proof, that the payment of tithes was not, at the promulgation of the law, then firſt enjoined, but, after having been more particularly defined and enlarged, was adopted into the judicial part of the Jewiſh polity.

But, whatever might have been the ſource of the cuſtom of paying tithes amongſt the Patriarchs,---whether proceeding

ceeding from the light of reaſon or nature, or from divine revelation,---it is certain, that the law of Moſes ordained the payment of tithes in the moſt explicit terms, and appropriated the produce of them to the worſhip of God, and, chiefly, to the maintenance of the Jewiſh prieſthood. However, as tithes were not the only proviſion, with which the Jewiſh prieſthood was endowed by the expreſs command of God, it will be neceſſary, in order to form a more adequate idea of the very conſiderable amount of their whole annual income, to enter into a particular enumeration of the ſeveral branches whereof it conſiſted.

From the Moſaic Ordinances, and the Illuſtrations of them by the Jewiſh Commentators, who muſt be allowed to be the beſt interpreters of their own religious rites and cuſtoms, it appears, that the Jews offered, annually,---

1.---Bic-

1.---Biccurim, or Firſt-Fruits, in the proportion of an hundredth part, out of ſeven kinds of increaſe, namely, wheat, barley, figs, grapes, pomegranates, dates, and olives, though ſome Rabbis ſay, that Firſt-Fruits of *all* kinds were due---Deut. xxvi. 2.

2.---Therumah, Trumoth, or Truma, or the Heave-Offering, out of the ſame products of the earth, in the proportion of a fortieth, fiftieth, or ſixtieth part---Deut. xviii. 4.

3.---They left a portion unreaped in each corn-field, called the Unreaped Corner,---and they were forbidden to beat down the whole growth of their olive-yards and vine-yards; which gleanings of corn and fruits were eſtimated at a fortieth or ſixtieth part---Levit.xix. 9, 10.---Deut.xxiv. 19, 20.

4.---They then deducted a tenth part, for the Levites' Tithe---Levit. xxvii. 30.---Numb. xviii. 21. ---Deut. xviii. 21.

5.---Afterwards, out of the remainder, they deducted a tenth part, for the Tithe for Feaſts*---Deut. xiv. 23.

6.---And, every third year, they alſo deducted, out of the remainder (from all the preceding payments or outgoings) a tenth part, for the Poor Man's Tithe*---Deut. xiv. 28.

All

* It hath been ſuggeſted, that theſe fifth and ſixth deductions, or

All theſe payments, or tithes, were made out of the produce of the Jewiſh harveſts, and amounted, annually, to between a fourth and a fifth part of the whole crop, and, triennially, to between a third and a fourth part,---as will be more particularly ſeen, from the following explanation, and the recapitulated ſtatement of it---

Suppoſing an entire crop of wheat, barley, &c. to have been equal, in Jewiſh meaſure, to ten thouſand ephahs, or, in Engliſh meaſure, to ten thouſand Wincheſter buſhels,---Before any tithes (properly ſo called) were to be paid out of it, there were to be deducted,---Firſt, Biccurim, at an hundredth part, or an hundred ephahs or buſhels---Secondly, Truma, at a fiftieth part, or two hundred ephahs or buſhels---Thirdly, the Unreaped Corner,

or ſecond and third tithes, as they are called, were one and the ſame, being appropriated to the ſolemnization of the holy feaſts the firſt and ſecond year, and to the uſe of the poor the third year. But *Comber* appears to have proved moſt ſatisfactorily, that they were wholly diſtinct from each other.

at a ſixtieth part, or an hundred and ſixty-ſix ephahs or buſhels; in all, four hundred and ſixty-ſix ephahs or buſhels, by which the groſs crop of ten thouſand was reduced to nine thouſand five hundred and thirty-two ephahs or buſhels---Fourthly, out of theſe, was then to be deducted, a tenth part, or firſt Tithe for the Levites, at nine hundred and fifty-three ephahs or buſhels, leaving a remainder of eight thouſand five hundred and eighty-one ephahs or buſhels ---Fifthly, from theſe was alſo to be taken, a tenth part, or the ſecond Tithe for Feaſts, at eight hundred and fifty-eight ephahs or buſhels; reducing the original entire crop to a nett produce of only ſeven thouſand ſeven hundred and twenty-three ephahs or buſhels, the various deductions having amounted to two thouſand two hundred and ſeventy-ſeven, or to nearly twenty-three ephahs or buſhels out of every hundred---And, Sixthly, to theſe pay-

payments, was to be added every third year, another tenth part, for the Poor Man's Tithe, at ſeven hundred and ſeventy-two ephahs or buſhels, out of the before ſtated remainder; and, thus, was the Jewiſh huſbandman's harveſt reduced every third year to a nett produce of only ſix thouſand nine hundred and fifty-one ephahs or buſhels out of ten thouſand,--- the ſeveral deductions having amounted to three thouſand and forty-nine, or nearly to thirty and an half ephahs or buſhels out of every hundred---

A groſs crop, conſiſting of ephahs or buſhels		10,000
Deduct, for Firſt-Fruits, at an hundredth part	100	
Deduct, for the Heave Offering, at a fiftieth part ...	200	466
Deduct, for the Unreaped Corner, at a ſixtieth part	166	
Remains to be tithed		9,534
Deduct, a tenth part, for the Levites' Tithe		953
		8,581
Deduct, a tenth part, for the Tithe for Feaſts		858
Nett produce, every firſt and ſecond year		7,723
Deduct, every third year, a tenth part, for the Poor Man's Tithe		772
Nett produce, every third year		6,951

Beſides this large proportion of the groſs produce of corn and fruits, the Jews were commanded to pay the Tithe of the Herd and of the Flock, that is, of calves, lambs and kids,---Levit. xxvii. 32.---and alſo, as appears from certain paſſages in the Old and New Teſtament, of every annual vegetable increaſe fit for the food of man,---Levit. xxvii. 30.---Numb. xviii. 21.---Deut. xxvi. 12.---Mat. xxiii. 23.---and Luke xi. 40. ---And, in addition to this very conſiderable revenue, ariſing from the produce of the earth and of animals, the Jewiſh Prieſts and Levites were endowed with forty-eight cities, (---Numb. xxxv. 1, 2, 3---) ſet apart ſolely for their reſidence, with a territory ſurrounding each of them, which was, collectively, equal to a thirtieth part of the whole land of Judea. (See, *Comber on Tithes,* Part 2.)

Moreover, from their attendance on the altar, there accrued to the Jewiſh Prieſthood

hood the following emoluments alſo, which, in the courſe of the year, muſt have alone created a vaſt and ample revenue,---namely,---

1.---The Fleſh of the Sin Offerings, and of the Treſpaſs Offerings---Levit. vi. 26. vii. 7.

2.---The Peace Offerings of the Congregation---Levit. xxiii. 20.

3.---The remainder of the Sheaf Offering at the Paſſover---Levit. xxiii. 10.

4.---The remainder of every Meat Offering---Levit. vi. 16.

5.---The Wave Breaſt and Heave Shoulder of the Peace Offerings---Levit. vii. 31, 34.

6.---The Heave Offering of the Sacrifice of Thankſgiving---Levit. vii. 14.

7.---The Wave Breaſt, and Heave Shoulder of the Nazarites' Ram---Numb. vi. 20.

8.---The two Loaves offered at the Feaſt of Pentecoſt---Levit. xxiii. 17.

9.---The Shew Bread, which was renewed every Sabbath---Levit. xxiv. 8, 9.

10.---The Leper's Log of Oil---Levit. xiv. 10, &c.

11.---The Cake, which every man offered annually of the firſt of his Dough---Numb. xv. 20.

12.---The Skins of the Sacrifices offered in the Temple---Levit. vii. 8.

 13.---The

13.---The Shoulder, two Cheeks and Maw of every Beaſt killed for common uſe---Deut. xviii. 3.

14.---The Redemptions of the Firſt-born Sons of every Mother---Numb. xviii. 16.

15.---The Firſtlings of all clean Beaſts---Numb. xviii. 18.

16.---The Redemptions of the Firſtlings of all unclean Beaſts---Numb. xviii. 15.

17.---The firſt of the Fleece of the Flock, at about a fiftieth part of the whole---Deut. xviii. 4.

18.---The Things devoted, or vowed to holy uſes, where no particular ſervice was mentioned ---Numb. xviii. 14.---And, laſtly,

19.---The Reſtitution of Things, ſtolen from the ſtranger, or from the Proſelyte, who had no repreſentative---Numb. v. 8.——(See, *Patrick's Commentary* on the foregoing texts, with *Prideaux on Tithes.)*

Though it may ſeem impoſſible to compute, with any degree of accuracy, the annual amount of a revenue drawn from ſo many different ſources, it was undoubtedly very large, and, moſt probably, far exceeding our ideas on the ſubject. However, from the preceding ſtatements, it may

may be ſeen, that the Jews, in various deductions for pious and religious uſes, paid, on the average of every three years, above a fourth part of the groſs produce of their corn and fruits;---and, it being a fixed rule amongſt them, not to pay their tithes till ready for immediate uſe, therefore, the tithe of the corn was alſo threſhed and cleaned, the tithe of the grapes was made into wine, and the tithe of the olives into oil;---and, even, when they were allowed to commute any of their tithes into money, the Jews were obliged to add a fifth part to the value of them. And, that the Jews, in general, abounded in numerous herds and flocks, and, conſequently, that the tithes of the annual increaſe of them, were of very conſiderable value, may be reaſonably inferred,---- from the paſtoral ſtate of the early ages of the world,---from the vaſt number of cattle, ſheep and goats continually uſed in

ſacrifices,---and from the great extent of ground, (a thirtieth part of the whole country,) which was allotted to the forty-eight cities of the Prieſts and Levites, and was for the maintenance of the flocks and herds they were permitted to poſſeſs, though prohibited from having every other kind of property.

Theſe tithes of corn, fruits and cattle, with the Levites' lands and the emoluments from the altar, have been judged (after all the neceſſary allowances for the Temple ſervice, the holy feaſts and the poor,) to have been, annually, equal in value, to a full fourth part of the whole vegetable produce of the land of Judea, and of the increaſe of its flocks and herds: ---all of which, by the expreſs command of God, was ſolely appropriated to the maintenance of the Jewiſh Prieſthood. (See, *Hooker's Eccleſiaſtical Polity*, Book 7th, and Section 23,---and, *Prideaux on Tithes*, page 95.)

And,

And, notwithſtanding the Jewiſh religious eſtabliſhment was thus expenſively great, and muſt have been felt, in particular, by the part of the nation employed in agriculture, yet we read not of any murmurs or complaints againſt it,---as being enormous and exceſſive in itſelf, or unneceſſary for the purpoſes of its inſtitution,---or, as being oppreſſive to the individual, or injurious to the community. On the contrary, the Jews conſidered the payment of tithes, as a ſanctification of the remainder of their increaſe;---they were accuſtomed to call their tithes, "The "Hedge, or Protection of their Riches;" ---and they were ſo ſcrupulouſly exact in the payment of them, that, in many inſtances, (through fear of not fulfilling its ordinances,) they actually paid a larger proportion, than the law enjoined.

It will poſſibly be here objected, that, in the Land of Promiſe, the Jews could very

very eaſily afford to pay ſuch a proportion of tithes, becauſe the greater part of them aroſe from the abundant, and almoſt ſpontaneous productions of the earth---

But, it does not appear, that the land of Judea was more adapted to bring forth its fruits ſpontaneouſly, than the land in any other part of the world: and, therefore, the expreſſions of the ſcripture, in alluſion to its fertility, muſt be underſtood in a limited ſenſe, and import no more, than that, on a due cultivation, it ſhould yield the moſt abundant increaſe, and that its produce ſhould be ſo exceedingly plenteous, that the land ſhould be, figuratively, like "a land flowing with milk "and honey,"---which, in thoſe days, being eſteemed the moſt neceſſary and delicate parts of man's ſubſiſtence, are uſed to comprehend all good things: and, granting, that the land of Judea did yield its increaſe, with comparatively ſmall labour, attention, or expence, yet, let it be

be recollected, that, (as hath been ſhewn before,) the Jews paid for tithes, firſt-fruits, &c. in proportion to that increaſe, ---not a *tenth*, but above a *fourth* part of the produce, and that, in a ſtate fit for the immediate uſe of the Prieſts and Levites.

It may alſo be objected, that the Prieſts and Levites, being one tribe, were a twelfth part of the Jewiſh nation,---and that, as tithes were allowed them, not merely for their ſervice in the tabernacle, but in conſideration likewiſe of their having no ſhare or inheritance in the land, and of their being prohibited from following any profeſſion, therefore, tenths or tithes of the whole landed and animal produce of Judea was only a decent and reaſonable proportion, for the ſupport and maintenance of themſelves and families---

This objection is not well grounded, as the tribe of Levi was not a twelfth part

of

of the Jewiſh people. In the latter end of David's reign, when the Jewiſh kingdom was at its higheſt point of ſplendour, proſperity and population, the whole number of the people, including the tribe of Levi, was probably (according to *Prideaux*, in his *Treatiſe on Tithes*) about 7,080,000 ſouls. And, in the beginning of Solomon's reign, the number of male Levites of the age of thirty years and upwards, is ſaid, in the 23d chapter of the 1ſt book of Chronicles, to have been 38,000; to which number, if we add (according to *Chambers's Dictionary*, under the article, *Political Arithmetic*) almoſt an equal proportion for thoſe, *under* the age of thirty years, the whole number of male Levites will have been about 76,000; and, by doubling that number for the proportion of females, it will be ſeen, that the whole tribe of Levi (omitting the odd thouſands) conſiſted of 150,000 ſouls, and,

con-

conſequently, was not a twelfth, but nearly a forty-ſeventh part only of the nation, and that, to ſupport that proportion of the whole people, there was appropriated an income, (drawn from various ſources) equal to a fourth part of the landed and animal produce of the kingdom.

Further, it may be objected, that though the payment of tithes was enjoined the Jews by the poſitive command of God, and was to be obſerved with the utmoſt exactneſs, yet, as the Jews are annihilated in their civil and eccleſiaſtical capacities as a nation, the obligation to obſerve the divine injunction hath of neceſſity ceaſed and been done away,---and that the ſcattered remnant of the nation, ſince the deſtruction of the Temple and their diſperſion, though they have Rabbis and Teachers of the Law, yet pay no tithes in obedience to the law, nor any thing in lieu of them, having no proper Levites to receive

receive their offerings, nor altar whereupon to hallow them---

To this, it may be anſwered---that the Jews, notwithſtanding their Temple ſervice hath been wholly ſet aſide, and they have continued a wandering and diſperſed people for ſo many centuries, have yet never ceaſed to obſerve ſuch part of their religious worſhip as hath been allowed them, or to contribute to the ſupport of it, and the maintenance of the Prieſts, or the repreſentatives of them, attendant thereon;---that, if they have omitted the payment of tithes, that omiſſion hath proceeded from their having no tithes to pay, becauſe they have not, till of late years, and in a few nations only, been permitted to acquire any landed poſſeſſions;---and that, ſo far from not paying any thing in lieu of tithes, we have an expreſs declaration, in *Selden's Hiſtory of Tithes* from *Pirk. Aboth.* that the more religious amongſt

amongſt the Jews, ſince the diſſolution of their civil power and ſubſequent diſperſion, pay, inſtead of tithes, a tenth part of their gains, as an alms.

THE Jewiſh Prieſthood, as we have ſeen, was endowed, by the appointment of God himſelf, with a moſt ample revenue, by no means proportioned to the work or duty incumbent on them, on account of their holy office. For, the whole ſervice of both Prieſts and Levites was of little extent or duration,---their attendance in the Temple being limited to two days alone in the year, (excluſive of the greater feſtivals,) according to the order of the courſes into which they were divided,---and their buſineſs, during the intermediate time on their return to their reſidences in the country, being to collect the revenues of the Prieſthood ariſing in the diſtricts around them, and to remit ſuch portions of

of thoſe revenues, as were requiſite, to Jeruſalem;---and, when theſe duties were diſcharged, as no part of the Synagogue worſhip, or of the inſtruction of the people, was committed to their care, they were at full liberty to manage their own private concerns, or, if ſo diſpoſed, to engage in any public employment, from which they were not debarred by their profeſſion.

If, then, God in his great wiſdom and goodneſs, thought fit to appropriate to the Jewiſh Prieſthood, ſo large an income for ſo inconſiderable a ſervice,---ſurely, the Chriſtian Prieſthood, who are prohibited from following any ſecular occupation at all, may with juſtice claim as great a revenue, if not a ſuperior one, for the obvious reaſon of being better entitled to it,---from their comparative attendance on the duties of their profeſſion, and from the more eminent qualifications neceſſary for their entrance into it.

The

The labour of the Jewiſh Prieſts and Levites, was exceedingly ſmall and temporary: whilſt that of the Chriſtian Miniſters is conſtant, and extended to fifty-two days in the year, or every ſeventh day, ſuppoſing them to be diſengaged during the other ſix,---which, in towns, villages, and large country pariſhes, is by no means the caſe, on account of the very great variety of occaſional duty, incident to ſuch ſituations; beſides, they have, at all times, the care of the morals of the people committed to their charge,---and are, alſo, neceſſarily employed, at all leiſure intervals, in preparing the diſcourſes required of them in public, on every return of the ſabbath day.

The qualifications, alſo, neceſſary for being admitted to the rights and privileges of a Jewiſh Prieſt or Levite, were merely natural, and, without any previous preparation or inſtruction, conſiſted ſimply

in being, legitimately deſcended from the true Sacerdotal line, of a certain age, and free from every bodily defect: whilſt the qualifications, neceſſary for entering into the Chriſtian Prieſthood, and for the due diſcharge of the duties annexed to it, are of far greater extent and conſequence,--- the Chriſtian Miniſters being called upon not only to pray and adminiſter the holy ſacraments, but to preach and catechiſe, to inſtruct the ignorant, and admoniſh the unſtable, to alarm the wicked, and confirm the good, and to ſupport and vindicate the truth of their religion againſt all adverſaries and gainſayers; which ſeveral duties, undoubtedly, require great acquiſitions of ſacred and profane knowledge, and which can be gained only by a long courſe of ſtudy, and expenſive education.

But, without entering into a further diſcuſſion of the reſpective merits or demerits

merits of the Chriſtian and Jewiſh Prieſthoods, ſufficient hath been already ſaid, to eſtabliſh the propoſition ſtated,---and to ſhew, that, though tithes are not demanded in the Chriſtian church, by virtue of the divine command laid upon the Jews, yet, as a variety of arguments may be drawn from the Jewiſh polity, which apply with the greateſt force to the elucidation and ſupport of the claim of the Chriſtian Miniſtry to tithes, as now paid in Chriſtian countries,---conſequently, the Clergy of the Church of England have, from the higheſt authority, (that of the Almighty Maker and Governor of the world,) "a "*Precedented* Right to the Revenues with "which they are endowed."

SECTION III.

FROM the concurrent teſtimony of all paſt or preſent Governments, few, if any of them, appear to have attained to any great celebrity, or to have exiſted for any length of time, without the cultivation of Religion,---and, moſt generally, of a National Eſtabliſhed Religion. Whence it may be concluded,---that the political exiſtence and ſtability of every State, materially, if not abſolutely depends, upon its having an eſtabliſhed ſyſtem of religious opinion and worſhip, though all others may be connived at, or tolerated under certain reſtrictions:---That the political continuance of every ſtate, being thus connected with its religious eſtabliſhment, it is both prudent, and neceſſary to the welfare

welfare of a ſtate, to ſupport its own Eſtabliſhed Religion, in its places and modes of worſhip, and in the perſons of its Miniſters, by an appropriated Proviſion:---That, as every ſtate poſſeſſes in itſelf an inherent right and power to appoint the ſource and proportion of this proviſion, when this proviſion is once fixed and ſtill continued by the laws of a ſtate, every individual therein is bound to contribute towards it, not only from a principle of religion, but from that of civil obedience:---That this proviſion, appointed by a ſtate for the ſupport of its Eſtabliſhed Religion, ought to be ſufficiently ample,---ſo as to afford a decent and becoming ſplendour to the places and modes of its public worſhip,---and alſo to put the Miniſters of its Religion in ſuch a due ſtate of independence, as ſhall reflect luſtre and credit, both on the ſtate and their holy profeſſion, and thereby increaſe the uſe and influence of them:---And, laſtly, that this proviſion

for the Miniſters of a National Religion, in return for their renunciation of all other means of worldly ſupport and maintenance, ought not to depend upon contingencies or human caprice, but to be invariably fixed and permanent, and to be ſolely appropriated to the uſe and benefit of them, and of their ſucceſſors, for ever.

THIS being premiſed, I proceed to ſhew, ---that, the Clergy of the Church of England have, not only a Natural and Precedented, but alſo a *Legal* Right to the Revenues with which they are endowed, "from the poſitive laws of this kingdom:" ---which have been enacted, from time to time, for near a thouſand years paſt, and have been explained and ſupported by repeated interpoſitions and deciſions of the Courts of Juſtice.

And, "In the degenerate ſtate of the "world in general, it may, perhaps," ſays Blackſtone in his Commentaries, "be

"more

" more beneficial to the Clergy of the " Church of England to found their title " on the law of the land, than upon any " divine right whatever, unacknowledged " and unſupported by temporal ſanctions." For, though a divine right to tithes might poſſibly have commenced, yet, as it might as poſſibly have ceaſed with the Jewiſh theocracy, and, therefore, the title of the Chriſtian Prieſthood to tithes (though ſurely in themſelves of divine original*)

* Though a divine right to tithes, under the Goſpel, is not here inſiſted on, yet it hath been moſt ſtrenuouſly ſupported by a variety of learned and critical works in almoſt every age of chriſtianity. Whence, it may be reaſonably ſuppoſed, that there muſt be ſome cogency of argument, in favour of the doctrine; as we can ſcarcely imagine, that ſo many writers of character, who flouriſhed in the earlier times of Chriſtianity as well as in the darker ages, and who muſt have been the luminaries of the periods in which they lived, would have idly ſpent their hours in elucidating and proving a point, which was *wholly* indefenſible. It would, indeed, be gratifying to curioſity, to aſcertain and review their method of defending, and their arguments in ſupport of, the poſition, were it not a taſk under which the induſtry and attention of man muſt ſink oppreſſed; ſince *Tildeſley, Archdeacon of Rocheſter*, in the ſecond edition of his *Animadverſions on Selden's Hiſtory of Tithes*, hath given a catalogue of ſeventy-two Authors, who, previous only to the year 1215, wrote in the defence of it.

cannot now be built on that foundation, ---yet, nevertheleſs, the Miniſters of the Goſpel have moſt undoubtedly a divine right to a competent maintenance, whatever the particular mode of that maintenance may be: ſince, beſide the expreſs precepts of the New Teſtament, natural reaſon will tell us, that, as hire to the labourer is of moral and perpetual right, "an order "of men," to uſe the words of Blackſtone, "who are ſeparated from the world, and "excluded from other lucrative profeſſions, "for the ſake of the reſt of mankind, have "a right to be furniſhed with the neceſ-"ſary conveniencies and moderate enjoy-"ments of life, at their expence, for whoſe "benefit they forego the uſual means of "providing them. Accordingly, all mu-"nicipal laws have provided a liberal and "decent maintenance for their Prieſts or "Clergy:---and ours in particular have "eſtabliſhed that of tithes, probably in "imitation of the Jewiſh law."

But,

But, previous to any enquiry into the right of the Eſtabliſhed Clergy to tithes, as their peculiar ſupport and maintenance, by the poſitive laws of this kingdom, it will be neceſſary to take a view, of the evidence of the New Teſtament, which implies or enjoins a proviſion for the Chriſtian Prieſthood, and of the ſources of that proviſion in the firſt ages of the Chriſtian church.

THE chief paſſages of the New Teſtament, on which the Chriſtian Miniſtry found their right to a proviſion, whereby they may live reſpectably, not merely as members of the eccleſiaſtical, but of the civil ſtate alſo, and who have undoubtedly the ſame right to be maintained at the public expence as the Magiſtrates and other Officers of a community,---are,---Matt. x. 10.---Luke x. 7.---1 Corinth. ix. 1--15, ---Gal. vi. 6.---2 Theſſ. iii. 8, 9.---1 Tim. v. 17,

v. 17, 18,---and 1 Tim. iii. 2. Theſe, excluſive of many others, which imply or illuſtrate the ſame right, are ſufficiently explanatory of the ſentiments of our Lord, and of the Apoſtle of the Gentiles, the great illuſtrator and confirmer of his Maſter's precepts.

In the two citations, from the Goſpels of Saint Matthew and Saint Luke, our Saviour expreſsly declares, "The workman "to be worthy of his meat," and, "The la-"bourer of his hire:" which declarations he made, immediately on having commiſſioned the twelve Apoſtles firſt, and afterwards ſeventy others on another occaſion, to go and prepare the way before him, by preaching the Goſpel, and, in confirmation of what they ſaid, by working ſigns and wonders, and healing all manner of ſickneſs amongſt the people. And, in the ninth chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians, Saint Paul refers to this very

precept

precept of our Lord, in aſcertaining and proving his own right to live of the Goſpel,---that is, if he had been ſo diſpoſed, to have refrained from working with his own hands for his ſupport, and to have eaten the bread of his converts, and been chargeable unto them---

"*Am I not,*" ſaith he, "*an Apoſtle* as "well as others? *Am I not free* to do "what they may? *Have I not ſeen Jeſus* "*Chriſt our Lord,* as well as they? *And* "*are not you my work in the Lord?* and "ſo, if others have a power to live upon "your temporal things, have not I rather? "*If I be not* ſo viſibly *an Apoſtle to others,* "*yet doubtleſs I am* ſo *to you; for the* "*ſeal,* or teſtimony, *of my Apoſtleſhip* "*are you in the Lord,* as having been "converted by me. *My anſwer,* there-"fore, *to them that do examine me,* why I "and my companions uſe not the ſame "freedom as other Apoſtles, *is this. Have*

"*we*

" *we not power to eat, and to drink,* with-
" out uſing ſo much abſtinence, or at the
" charge of the Church, as well as they?
" *Have we not power to lead about a ſiſter, a*
" *wife, as well as other Apoſtles, and as the*
" *brethren of our Lord, and Cephas? or I*
" *only, and Barnabas, have we not power to*
" *forbear working,* and to receive main-
" tenance of the Church, as others do?
" *Who goeth a warfare, at any time, at his*
" *own charge? who planteth a vine-yard,*
" *and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or, who*
" *feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk*
" *of the flock?* And ſhall we, ſoldiers of
" Jeſus Chriſt, the planters of his ſpiritual
" vine-yard, the paſtors of his flock, be
" debarred of this privilege? *Say I theſe*
" *things as a man,* that is, on principles
" of natural reaſon and equity, *or ſaith not*
" *the law the ſame alſo? For, it is written in*
" *the law of Moſes, thou ſhalt not muzzle the*
" *mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn:*

" *doth*

" *doth God* ſay this only to ſhew, he " *taketh care for oxen? or ſaith he it altoge-* " *ther, for our ſakes? For our ſakes, no* " *doubt, this is written, that,* in this ſpi- " ritual huſbandry, *he that ploughs ſhould* " *plough in hope* of reaping ſome advan- " tage by it; *and* that *he that threſheth* " *in* that *hope, ſhould be partaker of his* " *hope. If,* then, *we have ſown unto you* " *ſpiritual things, is it a great thing if we* " *ſhall reap* ſome of *your carnal things?* " *If others be partakers of this power over* " *you, are not we rather* ſo, who have laid " the foundation of a Chriſtian Church " among you, and have begotten you " through the Goſpel? *Neverthelefs, we have* " *not uſed this power* among you, *but* choſe " rather to *ſuffer* the want of *all things,* " *leſt we ſhould hinder the* advancement of " the *Goſpel of Chriſt:* And, not to inſiſt " only on myſtical interpretations of the " law, *Do you not know, that they who miniſter*

" *about*

" *about holy things*, as the Levites do in " the ſervice of the Temple, *live of the* " holy *things of the Temple, and* that *they* " *which wait at the Altar are*, according " to the inſtitution of the law, *partakers* " *with the Altar*, from which is left a " conſiderable portion to be eaten by the " Prieſts? *Even ſo, hath the Lord* Jeſus in " the Goſpel *ordained, that they who preach* " *the Goſpel, ſhould live of the Goſpel.*" (See, *Whitby's Paraphraſe* on the paſſage.)

And, though, in the next verſe, the Apoſtle proceeds, in vindication of his own integrity and diſintereſtedneſs, to ſay, " *But I have uſed none of theſe things, nei-* " *ther have I written theſe things, that it* " *ſhould be ſo done unto me,*"---and, though he ſays, in the third chapter of the ſecond Epiſtle to the Theſſalonians, by way of exciting his converts to the practice of induſtry by his own example, " *Neither* " *did we eat any man's bread for nought, but*

" *wrought*

" *wrought with labour and travel night and* " *day, that we might not become chargeable* " *unto any of you,*"---yet he takes care to add, in order to remove any doubts about it, and to vindicate his right to a maintenance, if he had chosen to have demanded it, " *Not because we have not power:*" for, in conformity to the power with which he was invested, he gives, in the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians, this command,---" *Let him that is taught* " *in the word, communicate unto him that* " *teacheth in all good things,*"---and, in the fifth chapter of the first Epistle to Timothy, directs, that " *The elders that rule* " *well, should be counted worthy of double* " *honour, especially those who labour in the* " *word and doctrine,*"---and again refers, as a reason, to the injunction of the Mosaic law, and to the precept of our Saviour,---" *For the scripture saith, Thou shalt* " *not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the* " *corn,*

" *corn, and, The labourer is worthy of his* " *reward*"---

That, by the expreſſion in the firſt paſſage,---" *Communicate in all good things,*"--- is to be underſtood the willing and liberal gift of all things, which teachers ſtand in need of, and which they who are taught, are (by God's bleſſing) able to beſtow, is evident from the ſenſe given to the ſame original words, in Luke xii. 19.---Luke xvi. 25.---Romans xii. 13.---and, Philip. xiv. 15.: and, indeed, moſt interpreters refer the ſeventh verſe, of this ſixth chapter of the Epiſtle to the Galatians, to the ſame ſubject---" *Be not deceived; God is* " *not mocked: for whatſoever a man ſoweth,* " *that ſhall he alſo reap*;"---that is, " Make " no excuſes in this caſe; God will not be " deceived by vain pretences; for, if you " will not give or ſow the ſeed of your " worldly ſubſtance to the comfort and " convenience of your ſpiritual teachers,

" you

"you can have no reaſon to expect, to "gather of them (through God's aſſiſting "grace) the harveſt of divine knowledge:" ---And, that, by the expreſſion in the ſecond paſſage,---"*Double Honour*,"---is to be underſtood a much more liberal maintenance, is ſo clear from the context, as to require no further proof or elucidation.

Laſtly, Saint Paul, in the ſecond chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to Timothy, enjoins, that Biſhops,---and, by conſequence, all inferior ranks in the Chriſtian Miniſtry,---ſhould be "*Given to hoſpitality*," or the adminiſtering to the wants of the ſtranger and neceſſitous: whence it neceſſarily follows, that, as we cannot conceive the Apoſtle would unwarily have given a nugatory precept, and, as the Chriſtian Miniſtry is virtually forbidden, 2 Tim. ii. 4. (---and ſuch hath been the general practice from the earlieſt times of

Chriſtianity,---) to engage in the affairs and employments of the world, therefore, they muſt have been furniſhed with the means, above their own maintenance, of diſcharging theſe duties of hoſpitality and charity,---the means of which could have ariſen from no other ſource, than that communication in all good things, with which their converts were commanded to ſupply them.

In fine---it muſt not paſs unremarked, that, though Saint Paul does not, by name, particularize tithes, as the ſupport and maintenance of the Chriſtian Miniſtry, through fear of offending the Jewiſh Prieſthood, yet, in the ſeventh chapter of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews, he cloſely inſinuates their right to them, whenever the Chriſtian Church (we may preſume) ſhould become civilly eſtabliſhed. And, whoever will ſeriouſly conſider, and candidly compare, the ſeveral paſſages, before cited from

the

the writings of the Apoſtle, will, perhaps, be inclined to think, that, had not the Apoſtle thought it expedient, for the welfare of the infant Church, to conceal his ſentiments, and to refrain himſelf from aſſerting and exerciſing a right, (of which he was nevertheleſs convinced,) he would have more explicitly pointed out the mode of maintenance for the Chriſtian Prieſthood, and would, undoubtedly, have had recourſe to the ancient one of tithes, which ſo univerſally prevailed in the Gentile world, and to which he had been accuſtomed, by divine appointment, under the Jewiſh theocracy.

SUCH was the language of Chriſt,---and, ſuch the injunctions of his Apoſtle,---concerning the maintenance of the Chriſtian Miniſtry; and which could not fail of being well received by thoſe, who had before their eyes the noble example of ſome

of the firſt converts to Chriſtianity, who, through an exceſs of zeal and liberality, even ſold all their poſſeſſions, and laid the price of them at the Apoſtles' feet,---no doubt, as much for the benefit of the Apoſtles themſelves, as for the benefit of thoſe who had been converted by them. Nor, are we to ſuppoſe, that inſtances of zeal, in theſe matters, were a mere temporary effuſion, diſplayed in Jeruſalem only, or confined to the age of the Apoſtles; for they extended beyond the contracted limits of Judea, and prevailed, in a greater or leſs degree, wherever Chriſtianity gained a footing in the world.

Juſtin Martyr, who flouriſhed about one hundred and ſixty years after Chriſt, ſays, in his Apology,---"We bring all our poſ-" ſeſſions into the common ſtock, and " therefrom communicate to every one's " neceſſities,"---of courſe, to the neceſſities of the Miniſters of the Goſpel, in common

common with, if not in preference to, all others. *Irenæus*, who lived about one hundred and eighty years after Chriſt, and who was the diſciple of Polycarp, the contemporary and diſciple alſo of Saint John, ſays likewiſe, that "The Chriſtians "conſecrated all they had to God's ſer-"vice, chearfully and freely, not giving "leſs than the Jews, becauſe they have a "better hope." Further, *Tertullian*, about the two hundredth year of the Chriſtian æra, ſays, "Amongſt the Chriſtians, all "things were common, except their "wives." And, in proof of the continuance of the ſame community of property, and of the appropriation of it to the purpoſes of religion, might be adduced the teſtimonies of *Origen*, *Cyprian*, *Gregory Nazianzen*, *Epiphanius*, *Saint Chryſoſtom*, *Saint Ambroſe*, *Saint Auguſtin*, and *Saint Jerom*, who all flouriſhed prior to the completion of the fourth century:---though it muſt be con-

feſſed, that the gradual failure of Chriſtians, in imitating the zealous piety and liberal munificence of the early converts to Chriſtianity, and in fulfilling the Apoſtolic injunctions, is very frequently complained of, by moſt of the latter of theſe Fathers; which failure (not only felt in their days, but ſtill more ſo afterwards,) was, eventually, one of the operative cauſes of eſtabliſhing the payment of tithes, firſt by eccleſiaſtical, and, in proceſs of time, by civil authority.

The Chriſtian annals do not furniſh us with any inſtances of the actual payment of tithes, as ſuch, in the firſt ages of Chriſtianity,---the zeal and liberality of Chriſtians, as hath been ſhewn before, having obviated the neceſſity of ſo doing: moreover, the unſettled lives of the Apoſtles, and of their immediate ſucceſſors, and the ſtill more unſettled ſtate of the Church, which, during nearly three centuries and

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an half, was harraſſed by an almoſt uninterrupted perſecution, rendered the payment of tithes impracticable: and there could have been no good cauſe to preſs the payment of a tenth, ſo long as men were voluntarily diſpoſed to have given a much larger proportion. This laſt fact is allowed by the great champion of the Anti-tithiſts: ---*Selden* ſays, "So liberal, in the beginning of Chriſtianity, was the devotion of believers, that their bounty to the Evangelical Prieſthood, far exceeded what a tenth could have been:"---"The liberality formerly uſed had been ſuch, that, in reſpect thereof, tenths were a ſmall part:"---And, "It had been little to the purpoſe, indeed, to have had tithes of annual increaſe paid, whilſt that moſt bountiful devotion of good Chriſtians continued in frequent offerings, both of lands and goods, to ſuch large value."

However, though there occur no inſtances of the payment of tithes, by actual name, during the firſt ages of Chriſtianity, yet there are ſufficient grounds to infer from the writings of the earlier Fathers, that ſome ſpecies of payments of a very ſimilar nature, (though not nominally, through cautious fear of giving greater offence, firſt, to the Jewiſh, and afterwards, to the Roman powers,) were made, at divers times to the Church, moſt probably, at the rate of a tenth in general, and as poſſibly, oftentimes in a much greater proportion,---and that the practice was in all likelihood obſerved, by the Jewiſh converts in conformity to their own law, and by the Gentile converts alſo in imitation of their own ancient eſtabliſhed cuſtoms. Proofs of this might be collected from the primitive ſtate of the Church,---from the works of *Juſtin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian,* &c.

&c. &c.---who all enlarge upon, and preſs the duty of offering firſt-fruits to God and the Church, in a manner, which pointedly inſinuates and implies the practice of former days: and, proofs might be adduced to ſhew, alſo, that, by firſt-fruits, they meant tithes, (though not as now paid,) from their having uſed the words, firſt-fruits and tithes, indifferently and as ſynonymous.

THE Revenues of the Church, during its infancy, conſiſted in offerings, which were purely voluntary, and in contributions due from the converts, as it were by right, or by virtue of the Apoſtolic command: the offerings were dedicated on the Altar, as often as they communicated; and, the contributions or collections were made, according to rule, firſt weekly, and afterwards monthly, with others alſo occaſionally, according to the neceſſities of the

the Church, or from the extraordinary zeal, devotion and charity of the well-diſpoſed and beneficent. All theſe offerings and contributions were brought into the general treaſury of the diſtrict or dioceſe; from which were iſſued, by the Biſhop, or the proper officers appointed by him to that employment, the ſupplies neceſſary for the uſe of the Church, the maintenance of the Clergy of all degrees, the wants of the Poor, Diſtreſſed and Aged, and for every other pious and good work. And, ſo large and plentiful were theſe Revenues, in the two firſt ages of the Church, that we have reaſon to believe, that they were fully adequate to all the good purpoſes, to which they were appropriated.

At length, however, the zeal and liberality, which animated the early converts to Chriſtianity, and for a long time glowed in the breaſts of ſucceeding ge-

nerations,

nerations, began to cool, and men gradually became leſs and leſs diſpoſed to communicate in all good things. So that, the Clergy, even in the third, and much more frequently in the fourth century, were neceſſitated to remind their flocks of a duty, ſo incumbent on them, and ſo indiſpenſibly requiſite to the welfare of the Church: on which account it is, that we find the works of eccleſiaſtical writers in thoſe times, ſo full of exhortations and diſcourſes on the ſubject of offerings or tithes,---and not, as hath been invidiouſly and unjuſtifiably remarked, as if the whole material duty of a Chriſtian conſiſted, in the exact or abundant payment of firſt-fruits, tithes, and offerings.

And, notwithſtanding, as early as the end of the ſecond century, the Church ſeems to have been in poſſeſſion of ſome landed property, and, afterwards, when Chriſtianity became civilly eſtabliſhed by Con-

Conſtantine the Great, was empowered in peace and ſafety to receive (---and moſt certainly did to a large amount---) legacies and endowments in land, in aid of the offerings and collections heretofore made, and ſtill continued,---yet, the ſtate of the eccleſiaſtical revenues was very precarious and unſettled, ſome beſtowing too little, and others nothing at all. Wherefore, the Fathers of thoſe days, in conjunction with the Rulers and Elders of the Church, found themſelves under the neceſſity of enquiring into the opinions and practice of former times; and, having aſcertained what had been taught by their predeceſſors, particularly *Irenæus* and *Origen*, they determined and ordained, that every man ſhould annually give or offer, in the proportion of a tenth part of his income: which portion, being in fact, leſs than the primitive, and what all good Chriſtians had already thought themſelves bound to

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appropriate, and no more than what they who were then converted from Judaiſm or Gentiliſm had been accuſtomed to pay, the ordinance of theſe Fathers and Rulers of the Church was, therefore, the more readily admitted into practice, and received by the members of the Church, as of neceſſary, conſcientious and poſitive obligation.

And, that, in and by theſe offerings, were meant tithes of annual increaſe, or of the produce of the earth, there cannot be a ſhadow of doubt, from the manner and expreſſions of the Fathers, in preſſing and enforcing the payment of them. But, however, we muſt not extend their meaning, to tithes in a modern ſenſe; but, that every man's offerings which he ſhould bring to the Church in the courſe of the year, ſhould be at leaſt equal, in value, to a tenth part of his annual increaſe. Agreeably hereto, *Cyprian* ſays, that the

Clergy

Clergy received their appointed ſtipends or portions, out of theſe offerings, "in "lieu of the tithes of fruits." And, it is acknowledged by even *Selden*, though unwillingly and with a very bad grace, in detached paſſages, that "Before the end "of the fourth century, it became the "uſual phraſe to offer tithes, becauſe they "were paid in the offerings of the faith-"ful, who thought themſelves obliged, in "making theſe offerings, to give every "year unto the Churches, of which they "were members, tithes or greater parts "of their annual increaſe, for the ſupport "of God's worſhip in them." (See, *Prideaux on Tithes.*)

THIS was the ſtate of the eccleſiaſtical revenues, about the beginning of the fifth century. And, notwithſtanding the Church was not inveſted with the power of compelling the payment of tithes, under the fore-

foregoing notion of offerings, yet it is probable, that a ſenſe of duty, and the force of received opinion would, in all times of public tranquillity, have effectually ſecured the obſervance of it. It is true, that, at and before this period, we read of various canons made in ſynods and councils, in reſpect (amongſt other important matters) to tithes, all tending to prove and enforce the obligation to account for them, and ſpecifying the mode in which it ſhould be done. It is not leſs true, alſo, that the authority of ſome of theſe councils may be denied, doubts having been entertained concerning the actual holding of them, and ſtill greater doubts concerning the acts, which have been aſcribed to them as genuine, and paſs under that denomination: which ſuſpicions, though they may apply to ſome, yet cannot impeach the credit of all,---as there are ſeveral councils of undoubted exiſtence, and ſeveral

veral of their acts of undeniable authenticity.

It may, therefore, be ſuppoſed, with all apparent truth, that theſe explanatory or ſupplementary ordinances of the councils and ſynods concerning tithes, originated in neceſſity. And, if we conſider the ſtate of the Roman empire, which, from the incurſions of the barbarous nations, muſt have in theſe times begun to have exhibited a ſcene of violence, confuſion and diſtreſs, it cannot be expected, that the Church ſhould have eſcaped misfortunes, but that it muſt have ſuffered, in the propagation of its faith, in the ſteady practice of its duties, and in the uniform obſervance of its commands,---and, with theſe evil conſequences, though endowed with landed property, muſt have experienced a very conſiderable diminution in its revenue.

During

During the continuance of the convulſions, which ſo inceſſantly agitated, and finally ſubverted, the Roman empire, and whilſt the kingdoms, erected on its ruins, were gradually ſubſiding into order and civilization, the Church alſo muſt have continued to ſuffer,---the ferocious temper of the times being ill ſuited to the mild and orderly principles of the Goſpel, and, in a manner, averſe to the ſupport of a religion ſo greatly diſregarded. Councils were, therefore, more frequently holden, in order to conſult upon and adopt ſuch meaſures, as were moſt likely to revive the ſpirit and influence of Chriſtianity, to reſtore the ancient diſcipline of the Church, and to enforce a more exact and regular payment of eccleſiaſtical dues. And theſe councils, ſummoned by eccleſiaſtical authority, ſometimes with and ſometimes without the permiſſion of the civil power, met, as often as occaſion required, in France,

Spain, Britain, Germany, and Italy, down to the beginning of the ninth century, at which time Charles the Great, held the Imperial crown, under the title of Emperor of the Weſt.

He was equally able and politic in the cabinet, as in the field. And, being ſenſible, that the ſubjects of his large and in part newly-acquired dominions, would not long remain in a juſt ſtate of obedience to his government, without ſome ſtronger and more efficacious tie than the arm of power, he had recourſe to the influence and aſſiſtance of religion; and, preparatory to the re-eſtabliſhment of its importance and neceſſary obligation in the minds of his ſubjects, he began with an apparent act of juſtice in himſelf, (not by making reſtitution, indeed, of the landed property, of which the Church had been violently diſpoſſeſſed by his father and grandfather,) but, by endowing the Clergy with

with an ample and legal right to tithes, in all parts of his extenſive dominions. To this, he might alſo have been induced, by the wiſe and prudential motives of attaching the eccleſiaſtical to the civil authority, being fully apprized, that an union in Church and State was indiſpenſibly requiſite to all good, happy and laſting government, and that to make religion valued and reſpected, it muſt appear valuable in itſelf, and reſpectable in all its neceſſary dependencies.

Thus, Charles the Great, gave the Clergy, not only a civil right to tithes, but, by conſequence, inveſted them with a power, which they never poſſeſſed before,---the power of recovering thoſe tithes by law, as often as they ſhould be withholden. Moreover, he commanded the Clergy to inſtruct the people, in what manner their tithes were to be paid; and, to ſatisfy and conciliate the minds of all

parties intereſted in the payment and receipt of them, he, further, ordained, that the produce of them ſhould be divided into four equal parts, for the Biſhop, for the parochial and other Clergy, for the relief of the Poor, and for the repair and building of Churches. He, finally, took great care, that all theſe his Capitulars, as they are called, ſhould be ſtrictly obſerved throughout his dominions.

And, it may be preſumed, that the ordinances, contained in them, were well received, as they appear to have given no riſe to complaints, but, on the contrary, to have been adopted almoſt immediately in Spain, and ſoon after in *Britain* alſo,---upon whoſe particular opinion and practice, concerning the payment of tithes under the Goſpel, I am now to enlarge; and of whoſe laws in reſpect thereto, though enacted at a very early and probably not the moſt enlightened period, it may,

may, nevertheleſs, be obſerved, that they come recommended to us, as co-eval with the rudiments of our juſtly admired and boaſted Conſtitution.

THOUGH the preciſe time of the converſion of the Britiſh inhabitants of this iſland to the Chriſtian faith, be not exactly aſcertained, it moſt probably took place ſoon after the firſt travels of the Apoſtles to preach the Goſpel. What might have been the ſtate of the Britiſh Church, till the middle of the fifth century, is a point of great uncertainty,---the accounts, which are extant concerning it, being too ſuſpicious and inconſiderable to lay much ſtreſs upon them. It is clear, however, that a Church exiſted, that it ſuffered during the Roman perſecutions, that, like other Churches, it was infeſted with theological diſputes, and, that it was almoſt annihilated under the invaſion of the Saxons,

who induſtriouſly deſtroyed all its acts, records and monuments.

The Saxons, indeed, originally came into Britain, in conſequence of a ſolemn invitation, to aſſiſt and protect the natives from the incurſions of the Scots and Picts; but, being ſoon ſenſible of the riches and fertility of the country, and convinced of the inability of the inhabitants to oppoſe their power, they formed the plan of eſtabliſhing themſelves in it, and ſo ſucceſsfully purſued the execution of their deſign, that, in the courſe of an hundred and fifty years, they entirely overpowered or expelled the native Britons, and remained thoroughly fixed in their poſſeſſions.

The time of the arrival of the Saxons is doubtful, but it was certainly prior to the year 450; from which period, till the commencement of the ſeventh century, the Saxons were in a continued ſtate of warfare with the Britiſh natives. And, when the

the conteſt with them had ceaſed, and the whole country, Wales and Cornwall excepted, had been reduced and divided into ſeven kingdoms, whoſe apparent intereſt it was to have ſupported each other, yet, the jealouſies, incident to ſuch petty principalities, perpetually kindled the flames of war amongſt them;---having no other enemies to contend with, they quarrelled amongſt themſelves, and carried their contentious and ambitious ſpirit to ſuch extremes, that the ſeven kingdoms, or Heptarchy, were at length united, by a train of battles, ſtratagems, treaſons, and murders, under the government of one ſole monarch, in the perſon of Egbert, the firſt king of England, in the year 827.

Whilst the Saxons were engaged in hoſtilities with the Britons, they could have had little time to attend to Religion of any kind: beſides, the ſpecies of Paga-

niſm in which they had been brought up, their military proweſs, and their luſt of conqueſt, were all intimately connected together, and were moſt ſuited to the unjuſtifiability of their deſigns, the ferocity of their diſpoſitions, and the uncivilized ſtate of their manners.

But, when they began to find themſelves firmly ſettling in their new poſſeſſions, their minds, at every interval of peace, turned towards the improvement of the country they had acquired, and the cultivation of thoſe arts, in which they quickly perceived themſelves to be far excelled by the vanquiſhed Britons. The decided ſuperiority of the latter, in moſt reſpects, ſtimulated the Saxons to every exertion of their natural powers; and thus, their manners inſenſibly aſſumed a ſofter and more civilized tone;---and, by an intercourſe with the few remaining members of the Britiſh Church, they became likewiſe

wiſe gradually acquainted with the leading principles and duties of Chriſtianity; their minds were enlightened, and, burſting aſunder the fetters of their Pagan theology, were thus prepared for the reception of the Goſpel.

This event came to paſs about the cloſe of the ſixth century. And, without entering into the particulars, it may be ſufficient to ſay of it, that the Chriſtian doctrines were ſo readily embraced throughout the kingdoms of the Heptarchy, that the Saxons were, in a ſhort time, as remarkable for their attachment, as they had been before, for their averſion, to Chriſtianity.

As their converſion was effected, by the efforts of the Roman Pontiff, it was conſequently accompanied, by the introduction of the Roman form of Church government alſo; and, for whoſe ſupport, a proviſion was ſoon made, by the piety and muni-

munificence of the different Saxon kings, and nobles, and, poſſibly, by the reſtoration of the property, and the re-eſtabliſhment of the rights, formerly enjoyed by the Britiſh Church. It can ſcarcely be doubted, but that the Saxon Clergy were immediately put in poſſeſſion of the ſame dues and privileges, as were enjoyed by their Roman brethren. And, as, in the Roman Church, tithes of annual increaſe, under the idea of offerings, had been accounted for, during the two preceding centuries, it is a ſtrong preſumptive proof, that, according to the laws of *Ina*, *Withred* and *Ethelbald*,---the Canons of *Egbert*, *Arch-Biſhop of York*,---the Epiſtle of *Boniface*, *Arch-Biſhop of Mentz*,---and a Canon of the *Council of Calcuth*, a Council of undoubted authenticity,---the ſame practice prevailed in the Saxon Church, and long before its Clergy were endowed with tithes, by any conſtitution of civil authority.

THE

THE moſt ancient law, concerning the civil right to tithes in England, was made by *Offa, King of Mercia;* by whom, (in imitation of Charles the Great, Emperor of the Weſt,) the Saxon Church, throughout his kingdom, was, about the cloſe of the eighth century, inveſted with a property and inheritance in tithes, and enabled to claim and enforce the payment of them.

AT the diſtance of about threeſcore years, in 854, this law of *Offa* was adopted in the kingdom of Weſſex, by a charter of *Ethelwulf*, which is to be found in the *Monaſticon*, and hath been thus tranſlated---

" I, Ethelwulf, by the grace of God, " King of the Weſt Saxons, in the holy " and moſt ſolemn feaſt of Eaſter, for the " health of my ſoul, and the proſperity " of my kingdom, and of all the people " com-

" committed by Almighty God to my
" charge, have with my Biſhops, Earls,
" and all other my nobles, brought to paſs
" this wholeſome counſel, that I have not
" only given the Tenth Parts of the lands
" throughout my kingdom to the holy
" Churches, but have alſo granted to our
" Miniſters placed in them, to enjoy them
" in perpetual liberty, ſo that this grant
" ſhall remain firm and immutable, freed
" from all royal ſervices, and from all
" ſecular ſervice whatever. And it hath
" pleaſed Ælſtan, Biſhop of Sherborne,
" and Swithun, Biſhop of Wincheſter, and
" the reſt of the chief men, to give their
" conſent hereto. This we have done for
" the honour of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and
" of the Bleſſed Virgin Mary, and of all the
" Saints, and for the reverence which we
" bear to the feaſt of Eaſter, that Almighty
" God may vouchſafe to be propitious to us
" and our poſterity. This charter was writ-

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" ten in the year of the incarnation of our " Lord Jeſus Chriſt 854, in the ſecond " indiction, on Eaſter Day, in our palace " called, Wilton. Whoſoever ſhall aug- " ment this our donation, may God aug- " ment to him his proſperous days: but, " if any one ſhall preſume to diminiſh or " change it, let him know, that he muſt " give account hereof before the judg- " ment-ſeat of Chriſt, unleſs, in the in- " terim, he doth make amends, by giving " ſatisfaction for the ſame. I Ethelwulf, " King---I Ælſtan, Biſhop---I Swithun, " Biſhop---I Wulflaf, Abbot---I Wer- " furd, Abbot---I Æthered and Ælfred, " the King's Sons---have given our con- " ſent hereto"---

In the following year, 855, Ethelwulf, on his return from a devout journey to Rome, extended this charter to the whole realm of England, in the govern- ment of which he had ſucceeded his fa-

" ther

ther Egbert, who, as before mentioned, had reduced into one the different kingdoms of the Heptarchy. This extenſion was confirmed by a ſecond charter, made with the *parliamentary conſent* of that time, and recorded by *Ingulphus*, the moſt ancient of our hiſtorians, and is contained in the following tranſlation---

" Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt reigning for " ever--- Whereas in our time we have " ſeen the burnings of war, the ravagings " of our wealth, as alſo the cruel depre- " dations of enemies waſting our land, " and many tribulations from barbarous " Pagan nations inflicted on us, for the " puniſhing of our ſins, even almoſt to " our utter deſtruction, and alſo very pe- " rilous times hanging over our heads,--- " For this cauſe, I Ethelwulf, King of " the Weſt-Saxons, have reſolved on an " wholeſome and uniform remedy, that " is, that I grant as an offering unto God,

" and

" and the Bleſſed Virgin, and all the
" Saints, a certain portion of my king-
" dom, to be held by perpetual right,
" that is to ſay, the Tenth Part thereof,
" and that this tenth part be privileged
" from temporal duties, and free from
" all ſecular ſervices and royal tributes,
" as well the greater as the leſſer, or thoſe
" taxes, which we call, Witerden, and
" that it be free from all things elſe, for
" the health of my ſoul and the pardon
" of my ſins, to be applied only to the
" ſervice of God alone, without being
" charged to any expedition, or to the
" repair of bridges, or the fortifying of
" caſtles, to the end, that the Clergy may,
" with more diligence, pour out their
" prayers to God for us without ceaſing,
" in which we do in ſome part receive
" their ſervice. Theſe things were en-
" acted at Wincheſter, in the church of
" Saint Peter, before the great Altar, in
" the

" the year of the incarnation of our Lord
" 855, in the third indiction, on the nones
" of November, for the honour of the
" glorious Virgin and Mother of God
" Saint Mary, and Saint Michael the
" Arch-Angel, and of the bleſſed Peter,
" Prince of the Apoſtles, and alſo of our
" bleſſed Father Pope Gregory, and of
" all the Saints. There were preſent and
" ſubſcribing hereto, all the Arch-Biſhops
" and Biſhops of England, as alſo Beorred
" King of Mercia, and Edmund King of
" the Eaſt Angles, and alſo a great multi-
" tude of Abbots, Abbeſſes, Dukes, Earls
" and Noblemen of the whole land, as
" well as of other Chriſtian people, who
" all approved of the Royal charter, but
" thoſe only who were perſons of dignity,
" ſubſcribed their names to it. King
" Ethelwulf, for the greater firmneſs of
" the grant, offered this charter upon the
" Altar of Saint Peter the Apoſtle, and the

" Biſhops

" Biſhops on God's part received the ſame " of him, and afterwards ſent it to be " publiſhed in all the Churches through- " out their reſpective dioceſes."

THUS, were the Saxon Clergy endowed, with a legal, hereditary and permanent right and property in tithes, by which their ſucceſſors have ever ſince holden them, and by which they are as fully entitled to and poſſeſſed of their tenth parts, as all proprietors of lands are of the other nine. It muſt, nevertheleſs, be owned, that theſe two charters by Ethelwulf, (the latter of which is recorded alſo by *William of Malmeſbury* and *Matthew of Weſtminſter*, with ſome difference,) have given riſe to a degree of controverſy, but to little purpoſe; ſince *Comber* and *Prideaux*, in their ſeveral *Treatiſes on Tithes*, have clearly ſhewn, that " The grant of tithes made " by King Ethelwulf in his Parliament,

" holden in 855, after his return from " Rome, was enacted for the whole realm " of England and all the lands of it, and " that tithes were then ſettled, not only " on the Clergy then in being, but on " them and their ſucceſſors for ever."

AMONGST the numerous laws which *Alfred* introduced for the good government of his kingdom, and for the recovery of his ſubjects from that diſorderly ſtate into which they had fallen in conſequence of the Daniſh invaſions, there was one which ſtrictly enjoined, that tithes ſhould be paid to the Church: And, amongſt the laws, ſubſequently agreed upon between *him* (in conjunction with his ſon *Edward*) and *Guthrun the Dane*, the payment of tithes was not only ordained, but a penalty added on the non-obſervance,---a Dane, being to pay a fine of twenty ſhillings, and an Engliſhman of thirty ſhillings.

THESE

THESE laws were further ſupported by that of *Athelſtan*, made about forty years afterwards, in the year 930, and which, from *Bromton's Chronicle*, hath been rendered into Engliſh, as follows---

" I, Athelſtan, the King, by the pru-
" dent advice of Wolfhelm my Arch-
" Biſhop and my other Biſhops, do com-
" mand all my Reeves in my kingdom,
" and ſtrictly enjoin them in the name of
" God, and of all his Saints, and as they
" tender my favour, that, above all things,
" they take care to pay out of my lands
" the juſt and due tithes, as well of all cattle,
" as of the annual product of the ground:
" And, moreover, let all our Biſhops, Earls
" and Reeves do the ſame out of their
" lands: And let all our Biſhops and
" Reeves, who adminiſter juſtice to thoſe
" they are over, take care, that they give
" judgment according hereto. And let
" all this be done by the day, that we

" have appointed for it, that is, the feaſt " of the decollation of Saint John the " Baptiſt. And I will, that the Cyric- " ſceat be paid to that place, to which it " doth belong, that there thoſe may enjoy " them, who by their miniſterial ſervice " ſhall beſt deſerve them from God and " us."

This command or law of Athelſtan was enacted in Parliament, and was ſo well received, that, in Kent, the Nobles, Gentry and Commons returned the King thanks, and expreſſed their readineſs to obſerve it. The *Cyricſceat*, or Church-Scot, mentioned in it, was, according to *Kennet's Parochial Antiquities*, a certain portion of corn paid out of the firſt threſhing after harveſt. And, it is moſt worthy of being remarked, that this Church-Scot is expreſsly commanded "To be paid to that place, to " which it doth belong;" which plainly ſhews, that, to whomſoever tithes had been

been formerly paid, they were now to be paid to thoſe who were moſt entitled to receive them, the Parochial Clergy; and that, therefore, parochial diviſions muſt, at this time, have generally obtained throughout the kingdom.

When tithes were firſt introduced into England, it hath been ſaid, that every man was at liberty to pay them to whatever Church or Prieſt he was moſt inclined, provided he paid them to ſome one, or elſe to deliver them to the Biſhop of his dioceſe, and leave the diſpoſal of them to his care. This notion, though, poſſibly, it would not bear a cloſe examination itſelf, hath, however, given birth to the wild conceit of *arbitrary conſecrations* of tithes, as they are called,---a poſition, which hath been often and ſatisfactorily refuted, and of which it would be waſting time to ſay ſcarcely more, than that the

payment of tithes, parochially, was very ancient, and was uſually, if not generally, obſerved.

Though it be allowed, that, during the two centuries next after the converſion of the Saxons, an arbitrary *diſpoſal*, and not conſecration of tithes, might have been permitted or connived at, this practice cannot be ſuppoſed to have prevailed in any extenſive, or even material degree; becauſe, it may be fairly preſumed, that by far the greater part of the actual payers of tithes would have been naturally inclined, to have diſpoſed of them in favour of thoſe Prieſts, with whom they had moſt ſpiritual intercourſe,---the Prieſts of the diſtricts or pariſhes, in which they themſelves reſided, and in which their tithes aroſe.

But, when parochial diviſions began to take place, then the payment of all offerings and tithes was undoubtedly ſoon con-

fined

fined to the Churches of the particular pariſhes, in which ſuch offerings and tithes were produced. And, as it cannot be denied, that pariſhes did generally obtain in England, by the middle of the tenth century, the aſſertion of thoſe who inſiſt, that the payment of tithes parochially in this kingdom, was neither ordained nor practiſed, till the latter end of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century, muſt fall to the ground: for, it is indiſputable, that tithes had been, civilly, commanded to be paid, to the reſpective parochial Churches to which they belonged, and, actually, muſt have been ſo paid, for more than two centuries before.

This laſt circumſtance is clear, from the introduction of the practice of Appropriations. For, if the right of tithes, parochially, had not been defined and long ſettled, and the conſequent payment of

tithes to the reſpective pariſh Prieſts had not been duly obſerved,---what end could have been anſwered by the introduction of appropriations, at the Norman Conqueſt?---Since, if every man had been at liberty, either fraudulently to refuſe the payment of his tithes, or elſe capriciouſly to diſpoſe of them to any eccleſiaſtical perſon, according to his own will and pleaſure, ſuch appropriations could not have been made to any beneficial purpoſe; as the Religious Houſes would have been merely inveſted with a ſimple right, without the power of enforcing it.

And, as to the civil and eccleſiaſtical documents, collected in favour of the notion of arbitrary conſecrations, they do not ſupport it,---inaſmuch, as they relate, ---either to the reſtoration of thoſe infeodated tithes, which in preceding times had been forcibly taken from the Church, ---or to the appropriation of tithes to Religious

ligious Houſes; which practice, introduced by the Normans, was foſtered by the colluſion of Kings, Popes, Biſhops and Patrons, for the ſupport and increaſe of the monaſtic inſtitutions.

About the year 944, *Edmund*, brother and ſucceſſor to Athelſtan, in a Parliament conſiſting of Laity and Clergy, holden at London, enacted a law, which may be ſeen in *Spelman's Councils*,---"Charging "all Chriſtian men, upon their Chriſti-"anity, to pay to the Church their tithes, "their Cyricſceat, and plow-alms; and "thoſe, who neglected it, are declared "accurſed."

Edgar, the ſon of Edmund, in the year 967, in a full aſſembly and by the advice of his wiſe men, made a law reſpecting and enforcing the payment of tithes, in a much more explicit and effectual manner, than any

any other which had preceded it. This law hath been tranſlated from *Bromton's Chronicle*, in the following words---

" Firſt of all, Let the Church enjoy all " her rights and immunities, and let every " one pay to the Mother-Church to which " he belongs, tithes of all lands which " the plow goes over, whether they be " lands of the gentry, or the lands of their " vaſſals. If any Lord hath a Church " built on his charter-hold lands, that " hath a Church-yard belonging thereto, " with right of burial, he may aſſign a " third part of his tithes thereto. But, if " there be no Church-yard belonging " thereto, with right of burial, the Lord " of the ſoil may give unto the Miniſter " of that Church for his maintenance, as " much of his nine parts, as he ſhall think " fit; but the tenth part muſt be paid to " the Mother-Church. And the Church- " due, which is called, Cyricſceat, which

" is

" is due out of every free-man's houſe,
" muſt alſo be paid to the Mother-Church.
" All muſt pay the tithes of the young of
" their cattle before Whitſuntide, of the
" fruits of the earth before the Autumnal
" Equinox, and their Cyricſceat on Saint
" Martin's Day. If anyone doth not pay
" them, let him undergo the penalty pre-
" ſcribed in the Judicial Book. And, if
" any one ſhall refuſe to pay his tithes in
" ſuch manner, as we have preſcribed,
" then let the King's Reeve, and the Bi-
" ſhop of the Dioceſe, and the Miniſter of
" the Pariſh convene together, and let
" them by force cauſe the tenth part to
" be paid to the Church, to which it was
" due, leaving only the ninth part to the
" owner. And for the other eight parts,
" the Lord of the Manour ſhall have one
" four parts, and the Biſhop of the Dio-
" ceſe the other four. And let this be
" done, whether the party offending hold
" of the King, or of any other Lord."

In the year 1008, *Ethelred*, the ſon of Edgar, in a general Parliament of all England, enacted a law in favour of the Church, enforcing the payment of eccleſiaſtical dues, as appears from the ſubſequent tranſlation of it, from *Spelman's Collection of Councils*---

" Let every man duly pay every year,
" what is due unto God, the plow-alms
" within fifteen days after Eaſter, the
" tithe of young cattle at Whitſuntide,
" the tithe of the fruits of the earth on
" the Feaſt of All-Saints, and the Church-
" due, called Cyricſceat, on Saint Mar-
" tin's Day. The Church-due for find-
" ing lights, muſt be paid thrice in every
" year. But, it is moſt fitting, that the
" fee for burial be always paid at the time,
" when the grave ſhall be dug. If any one
" burieth a dead body out of the pariſh
" to which the deceaſed did belong, he
" ſhall nevertheleſs pay the fee of burial

" to

" to that pariſh Church, where he was,
" whilſt he lived, a pariſhioner"---

And, again, in the year 1012, Ethelred added another law, ſtill further enforcing the payment of tithes, and confirming the laws of his predeceſſors, which may be ſeen in *Bromton's Chronicle*, and hath been thus given in Engliſh---

" We command, that every man, for
" the love of God, and all his Saints,
" ſhall pay his Cyricſceat, and his full
" tithe in the ſame manner, as it was
" done in thoſe times of our predeceſ-
" ſors, when it was beſt done, that is,
" that he pay for tithe every tenth acre,
" that the plow ſhall go over. And every
" other cuſtomary due muſt be paid to
" the Mother-Church, to which every
" man belongs, for the love of God. And
" let no man take from God, what be-
" longs to God, and which our prede-
" ceſſors have conſecrated to Him."

THOUGH

THOUGH *Canute* was, by right of conqueſt, enabled to make any changes, in the Church or State, to which he might have been diſpoſed, yet it is not found, that the Church experienced any alteration, on his acquiſition of the Crown. On the contrary, he was ſolicitous to preſerve the ancient uſages of the Church, in their utmoſt latitude and vigour, as is evident from a letter, written by him from Rome to his Biſhops and Nobles, and which is thus tranſlated from *William of Malmeſbury*---

" I do now ſolemnly charge all my " Biſhops, and all the Reeves of my king- " dom, by the faith which they owe un- " to me, and unto God, that, before I " ſhall return into England, ye take ef- " fectual care, that the dues which we " owe out of all things to the Church, " be fully paid, and the tithe of young " cattle for the year in which they are

" pro-

" procreated; and the Peter-Pence which " we owe unto Rome; and that this be " paid, as well out of cities, as villages, " and by the middle of Auguſt the firſt- " fruits of the ſeed, (which in the Saxon " is called, Cyricſceat,) to the Church " of the pariſh, where every one dwel- " leth. And, if theſe, and ſuch like dues " be not fully paid by the time I ſhall " return, whoever he be, that ſhall be " found faulty herein, the royal coercion " ſhall force him, according to the laws, " ſtrictly and without any indulgence, to " pay the ſame"---

And, in further confirmation of the rights of the Church, Canute, on his return from Rome, in a Parliament holden at Wincheſter, about the year 1030, revived all the moſt obligatory laws of his predeceſſors, in the following law, as it hath been tranſlated from the Saxon original, in *Spelman's Councils*---

" Let

" Let every man annually render unto " God, what is of right due unto Him. " Let him pay the plow-alms within fif- " teen days after Eaſter, the tithe of the " young cattle at Whitſuntide, and the " tithes of the fruits of the earth on the " ſolemn feſtival of All-Saints. But, if " any one ſhall refuſe to pay his tithes in " ſuch manner, as we have ſaid, that is, " every tenth acre that is plowed, let the " King's Reeve, the Biſhop, the Lord of " the Manour, and the Miniſter of the " Pariſh convene together, and by force " cauſe the tenth part to be paid to the " Church, to which it is due, leaving the " ninth part only to the owner. And, as " to the other eight parts, the Lord of the " Manour ſhall have one four parts, and " the Biſhop of the Dioceſe the other " four. And this ſhall be done, whether " the offender hold of the King, or of " any other Lord. Let the Church-due,

" called

" called Cyricſceat, be paid on Saint
" Martin's Day: if any one ſhall delay to
" pay it, let him render to the Biſhop
" eleven-fold, and alſo pay a fine to the
" King of one hundred and twenty ſhil-
" lings. If a Lord hath a Church built
" on his charter-hold lands, which hath
" a church-yard belonging thereto, with
" right of ſepulture, he may aſſign the
" third part of his tithes to that Church.
" But, if that Church hath not a church-
" yard belonging thereto, with right of
" ſepulture, then let the Lord of the ſoil
" give to the Miniſter of that Church for
" his maintenance, as much of his nine
" parts, as he ſhall think fit, but the tenth
" part muſt be paid to the Mother-Church.
" And the Church-due, called Cyricſceat,
" muſt alſo, for every free-man's houſe,
" be paid to the Mother-Church. Thrice
" every year, a certain ſum of money muſt
" be paid for the maintaining of lights at

" the pariſh-church, that is to ſay, for " every hide of land an halfpenny at " Eaſter, another halfpenny at the ſolemn " feaſt of All Saints, and the like muſt be " done at the feſtival of the Purification " of Saint Mary. And it is fitting, that " at the digging of every grave, the burial " fee ſhould forthwith be paid to the " Miniſter. And, if any man ſhall bury " his dead out of the pariſh, of which he " was an inhabitant, the fee of the burial " muſt notwithſtanding be paid to the " Church, to which of right it belongs."

THE enacting of ſo many laws, concerning the payment of tithes, within the ſpace of two centuries, may induce a ſuſpicion of their being diſobeyed; but the repetition and re-enaction of them proceeded from the violence of the times, which, exhibiting an almoſt continued ſeries of depredations and invaſions, threw both

Church

Church and State into ſo great diſorder, that, upon every return of tranquillity, freſh exertions were requiſite for the legal information of the people, in order to reſtore due obedience to eccleſiaſtical, as well as civil authority.

DURING the reign of *Edward, the Confeſſor*, who ſucceeded to the Crown of England in the year 1041, all the laws of his predeceſſors were collected and digeſted into one code, and eſtabliſhed as the law of the whole realm, in different parts of which, the Weſt-Saxon, the Mercian, and the Daniſh law, had hitherto prevailed, though various particular laws were, nevertheleſs, of neceſſary and general obligation, throughout the kingdom. It doth not appear, that Edward made any addition to the Engliſh laws, in reſpect to either eccleſiaſtical or civil affairs, but that he merely reduced the laws he found

in uſe, into one uniform point of view and obſervance: and, therefore, he muſt be underſtood, not as the Author, but the Compiler only of the laws, which paſs under his name.

That part of the collection, which relates to the concerns and revenues of the Church, is to be found in *Hoveden and Knighton*, and hath been thus turned into Engliſh---

" Of all corn, the tenth ſheaf is due to " God, and, therefore, is to be paid unto " Him. If any one ſhall have an herd of " mares, let him pay the tenth colt, but, " if he ſhall have only one or two mares, " let him pay a penny for every colt, " which he ſhall have of them. In like " manner, if he ſhall have many cows, he " ſhall pay the tenth calf; if he ſhall have " but one or two cows, then he ſhall pay " an halfpenny for every calf. And, he " who ſhall make cheeſe, muſt give unto " God

" God the tenth cheeſe; but he that ſhall
" make none, muſt give the milk of every
" tenth day, and ſo likewiſe muſt be paid
" the tenth lamb, the tenth fleece, the
" tenth part of the butter, and the tenth
" pig. And ſo, in like manner, of the
" bees, the tenth part of the profit. And
" ſo, likewiſe, of woods, of meadows,
" of waters and mills, of parks, of
" ponds, of fiſheries, of copſe, of orchards
" and gardens; and of trade, and of
" all things which the Lord ſhall give,
" the tenth part is to be rendered unto
" Him, who giveth us the other nine parts
" with that tenth. Whoſoever ſhall de-
" tain this tenth part, ſhall, by the juſtice
" of the Biſhop and the King, be forced
" to the payment of it, if need ſhall be.
" For theſe tithes Saint Auguſtin" *(or more properly Saint Auſtin)* " hath preached,
" and they have been granted by the
" King, Nobles, and people of the land;

" but afterwards, by the inſtinct of the " devil, many have detained them. And " rich Prieſts being negligent, did not " care to take pains to recover them, be- " cauſe they were ſufficiently ſupplied " with the neceſſaries of life. For, in " many places, where are now three or " four churches, there, in former times, " was but one, and ſo the tithes began to " be diminiſhed."

On the *Norman Conqueſt*, the laws of Edward, the Confeſſor, were, upon the petition of the Engliſh, renewed and confirmed in the fourth year of the Conqueror's reign, and, at length, after repeated ſtruggles for above an hundred and fifty years, between the ſucceeding Kings and Barons, were ſolemnly eſtabliſhed in the reign of *Henry the Third*, under the title of *Magna Charta:* in which, as well as in the laws of Edward, the Confeſſor, the

the claims and dues of the Church are confirmed in theſe words,---"The Church "of England ſhall be free, and ſhall have "her whole rights and liberties invio-"lable."

It would be eaſy to proceed, in ſtating the evidence of the legal right of the Clergy to their revenues, from the Conqueſt to the æra of the Reformation; but the continuance of ſuch an hiſtorical deduction would certainly be tedious and diffuſe, and might be alſo unneceſſary; ſince, having ſhewn the original and firſt civil eſtabliſhment of the right, and traced its progreſſive explanation and confirmation, through a period of near four hundred years, amidſt ſcenes of external invaſion and internal commotion, it can ſcarcely be imagined, that this right would experience any diminution, in more ſettled times of tranquillity, public order,

and ſecurity. Indeed, the contrary is ſo certain, that the legal title of the Church to its revenues, was never queſtioned in any ſubſequent age, except by the Monks and Friars, who cavilled at it, not from any perſuaſion of its indefenſibility, but with a view to promote the intereſt and aggrandiſement of their own inſtitutions, ---by unſettling the minds of patrons, and thereby rendering them more eaſily inclined to the practice of appropriations.

At the time of *The Reformation*, the Engliſh Clergy were in full poſſeſſion of all the rights, with which they have been endowed, and which they had enjoyed, with little diſturbance or diminution, for nearly ſeven centuries. And, upon the great revolution, which then took place in eccleſiaſtical matters,---when that part of the property of the Church, which had

had been diverted from its original intention to the ſupport of the Monaſtic foundations, was, on their ſuppreſſion, converted to ſecular uſes,---yet, the right to tithes was ſo far from being invalidated by that tranſaction, that it then abſolutely received a freſh confirmation.

All the poſſeſſions of the ſuppreſſed Societies were given to the King, by the exiſting Parliament, in fee and perpetuity, and in as full and ample manner, as the late proprietors enjoyed them. And, when, by the grant or ſale of the tithes, which made a conſiderable part of thoſe poſſeſſions, lay-men became tithe-holders, an act of Parliament was paſſed in the thirty-ſecond year of *Henry the Eighth*, (and further confirmed and enlarged in the ſecond and third year of *Edward the Sixth*,) not to confirm their title, but to enable impropriators, like the Clergy, to recover their tithes by legal proceſs. Theſe

acts,

acts, of Henry the Eighth and Edward the Sixth, were intended to ſuppreſs any doubts or notions which might have ariſen to the prejudice of the Clerical and Lay poſſeſſors of tithes, from the King's having caſt off the Pope's Supremacy, and cauſed ſuch great alterations in the eccleſiaſtical ſyſtem of this kingdom. And they were in aid of another act, which had paſſed before, in the twenty-ſeventh year of Henry the Eighth, and which declares, in the preamble of it, that "Tithes are "due unto God and Holy Church," and, in the body of it, enacts, that "Every "perſon, according to the eccleſiaſtical "laws and ordinances of the Church of "England, and after the laudable uſages "and cuſtoms of pariſhes, ſhould yield and "pay his tithes, offerings, and other dues."

THUS, were the rights of the Clergy of the Church of England, ſolemnly acknow-

knowledged and expreſsly confirmed, at a period the moſt critical, intereſting and important the Clergy ever experienced, and which ſeemed to threaten the very exiſtence of their eſtabliſhment:---Rights, which every ſucceeding Monarch, at his Coronation, hath ſolemnly ſworn to maintain, and againſt which, few adjudications have militated, in all the various cauſes brought into the Courts of Juſtice concerning them, and in whoſe favour, for the laſt thirty years in particular, as often as the Clergy, the poſſeſſors of them, have been compelled to ſeek legal redreſs, the judicial determinations have been in the proportion of ſix to one.

LITTLE attention hath been paid to the numerous canons and conſtitutions of Engliſh Councils and Engliſh Biſhops, which began to be ordained from the earlieſt times of the Saxon Church. Though they

they aſſert, define and enforce the payment of the rights and dues of the Clergy, with the utmoſt clearneſs and preciſion, and with the moſt perſuaſive motives, yet, as they reſulted ſolely from eccleſiaſtical authority, the introduction of them here would have been unneceſſary and inapplicable; ſince, the profeſſed deſign, of this part of the Eſſay, hath been to inveſtigate the Title of the Clergy to their Revenues, from the ſanctions of Civil Authority only.

And, without making any long recapitulation of what hath been advanced, in proof or illuſtration of the Civil Right of the Clergy of this kingdom to their Revenues, this ſhort Concluſion, it is to be preſumed, is plainly deducible,---that, as this Right hath been, repeatedly and invariably, acknowledged, confirmed and ſupported, by a long ſucceſſion of Kings,

and

and by various acts of the legiſlature, from the firſt laws of the Saxon Monarchs, through a period of near a thouſand years, down to the preſent time,---therefore, the Clergy of the Church of England have, from the Poſitive Laws of this kingdom, "a *Legal* Right to the Revenues with "which they are endowed."

AN

ESSAY

ON

THE REVENUES

OF

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

IN the Three Sections of the foregoing Chapter, I have endeavoured to illuſtrate and confirm, from Reaſon and Nature, from Divine Precedent, and from the Poſitive Laws of this Kingdom, the Right of the Clergy of the Church of England to the Revenues with which they are endowed. I proceed, therefore, to the ſecond object in view, namely, to ſhew,---

" That

" That, though theſe Revenues may, col-
" lectively appear large, they afford a very
" moderate Competency to the many
" Thouſands whoſe Subſiſtence depends
" upon them:"---which will be more clearly ſeen, by enquiring into the Value of theſe Revenues, and by aſcertaining the Number of the Clergy amongſt whom they are divided.

LET us ſee, then, what hath been ſuppoſed to be the actual value of them---In a publication, addreſſed to *The Arch-Biſhop of Canterbury, by Doctor Watſon, Biſhop of Landaff, in* 1783, his Lordſhip ſays, that " The Revenue of the Church
" of England is not, I think, well under-
" ſtood in general; at leaſt, I have met
" with a great many very ſenſible men of
" all profeſſions and ranks, who did not
" underſtand it. They have expreſſed a
" ſurpriſe, bordering on diſbelief, when
" I have

" I have ventured to aſſure them, that the " whole income of the Church, includ- " ing Biſhopricks, Deans and Chapters, " Rectories, Vicarages, Dignities and Be- " nefices of all kinds, and even the two " Univerſities with their reſpective Col- " leges, which being Lay-Corporations " ought not to be taken into the account, " did not amount upon the moſt liberal " calculation, to 1,500,000l. a year."--- And, though his Lordſhip does not ſug- geſt the means purſued in forming this calculation, yet he adds, that " He hath " good reaſon to believe it to be near the " truth."

However, to this ſtatement of the learn- ed and able prelate, it hath been objected, that, ſo far back as the year 1720, the Revenue of the Clergy, (---by which, it is ſuppoſed, are meant the Revenues of all Biſhops, Dignitaries, and Parochial Miniſters,---) was " calculated, by means

" of Lands, Tithes, Rents, Salaries, Fees " and Perquiſites, to amount to 2,000,000l. " per annum:"----(See, *The Independent Whig, No.* 21.) And, that, as in the courſe of ſeventy years, that revenue of 2,000,000l. muſt have been neceſſarily much augmented, in conſequence of the improvements in agriculture, and of the great riſe in the landed rental of the kingdom,---therefore, the valuation of the Biſhop of Landaff cannot be accurate, but muſt have been formed in error, or with a view to deceive.

Though this objection hath the appearance of conſiderable weight, yet the ſtatement, upon which it proceeds, may be juſtly queſtioned, being a mere aſſertion, unſupported by data or argument, and which was, probably, founded on little better than conjecture, or very vague intelligence. And, that the writers of the political paper, in which it appeared, ſhould

ſhould have been miſtaken, is very poſſible,---ſince it was next to an inſurmountable difficulty for them to acquire any certain information on a ſubject, which neither profeſſion, nor, perhaps, connexion, could have led them to inveſtigate, with any probability of ſucceſs.

On the contrary, Biſhop Watſon's ſtatement will, hereafter, appear to be not materially erroneous, and, when oppoſed to the foregoing, to be correct. And, ſurely great credit is due to it;---ſince, from his high rank and ſituation in life, his long reſidence in one of the Univerſities, and his known indefatigable induſtry and reſearch, it muſt be allowed, that he enjoyed the faireſt and moſt probable opportunities of arriving at almoſt a certainty on (what may be called in regard to him) a profeſſional point,---and ſince, from his acknowledged integrity of mind, and firmneſs of ſpirit, he would have diſ-

dained to have given to the world, as true, intelligence, which he either ſuſpected, or knew to be falſe.

In order to do juſtice to the comparative accuracy of the Biſhop of Landaff's valuation of the Revenue of the Church of England, it will be neceſſary to aſcertain the proportions of it, ſeverally poſſeſſed, by the different ranks of the Clergy, and by the two Univerſities.

From the authority of a dignitary in the Church, of moſt reſpectable character and information, the Revenues of the Biſhopricks are ſtated, as being under 3,000l. per annum, each, on the average,---and the Revenues of the Deans and Chapters, including all dignitaries, &c. connected with the reſpective Cathedrals, as being about 5,000l. per annum, each, on the average:---the whole income of the Epiſcopal and Dignified part of the Clergy, thus, amounting to 212,000l. per annum;

of

of which the Biſhops, who are twenty-ſix in number, are in poſſeſſion of about 72,000l.---and the Deans and Chapters, who are twenty-eight in number, with the other independent dignitaries, are in poſſeſſion of about 140,000l. The Revenues of the two Univerſities of Cambridge and Oxford, have been ſtated, a very few years ago, at 180,000l. per annum,---a computation, which I readily allow, and adopt; as it nearly coincides with the reſult of the enquiries, which I have been enabled to make myſelf.

And, thus, when, from Biſhop Watſon's collective valuation of 1,500,000l. a year, are deducted 392,000l. for the Revenues of the Epiſcopal and Dignified Clergy, and of the two Univerſities, the remainder, amounting to 1,108,000l. will be the annual income of the Parochial Clergy; which approaches, nearly, the real income, probably now enjoyed by

them, as will be eſtabliſhed by evidence, it is to be preſumed, of a nature, unexceptionable, concluſive and ſatisfactory to every candid enquirer.

It may, poſſibly, at firſt ſight, create much ſurpriſe, and give occaſion to equal heſitation in aſſenting to the truth of it, when it is aſſerted, in ſupport of the Biſhop of Landaff's valuation, that the Revenue of the Epiſcopal, Dignified and Parochial Clergy, unconnected with that of the two Univerſities, does not, at this time, much exceed 1,500,000l. a year.

This revenue is variouſly derived,---from reſerved money and corn rents,---from fines for the renewal of leaſes,---from glebe and augmentation lands,---from compoſitions for tithes,---and from other inconſiderable ſources of emolument, under the denomination of ſurplice-fees.

The

The proportion of this revenue, which is appropriated to the Bench of Biſhops, hath been already ſtated to be about 72,000l. per annum, giving to each of the prelates, on the average, an annual income of nearly 2,770l.---though, indeed, the income of one or two Sees may be really three times as much, and of ſome others may not amount to a fourth part of it.

It is true, that the groſs amount of the preſent epiſcopal revenue hath been calculated at 90,000l. per annum, and which, if correct, would make an annual addition to the foregoing income of each prelate of upwards of 640l. But, upon a very little enquiry into the particular amount of each See, as given in the publication alluded to, it will be readily ſeen, that the revenue, there allotted to each See, is, in almoſt every inſtance, either miſ-ſtated, or exaggerated, ſo that, the credibility of the whole calculation is

compleatly impeached; and it evidently appears to have been founded upon no real information, but upon the moſt erroneous intelligence, or, otherwiſe, to have originated in wilful and malicious miſrepreſentation.

Upon comparing the preſent income of the Sees with the valuations of them in the King's Books, (including the firſt-fruits of the ſeveral dignities and livings, annexed to them ſince the time of Henry the Eighth, or always held in commendam with them,) it will be found, that, in the courſe of two hundred and fifty years, the epiſcopal revenues have increaſed in a three-fold proportion,---the old valuation of them in the King's Books, and of the dignities and livings ſince annexed or held in commendam with them, being about 24,000l. per annum: which comparatively ſmall increaſed value of the epiſcopal revenues will require a ſhort explanation;

planation; as an idea generally prevails, that all the eccleſiaſtical revenues of the kingdom have increaſed, during the above period, in the proportion of at leaſt ten to one.

This is certainly true, in reſpect to the average of all Parochial Benefices; but, in reſpect to the Revenues of the Biſhops, Deans and Chapters, and other Dignitaries in the Church, it is, as certainly, falſe. This material difference, between the progreſſive increaſe of the incomes of the Epiſcopal and Dignified Clergy, and thoſe of the Parochial Clergy, may be attributed,---to the conſiderable, fraudulent and forcible alienations of the Epiſcopal and Cathedral (or Church) lands, previous to the ſtatute of the firſt of James the Firſt,---to the gradual loſs of them, continually accruing from the want of proper ſurveys and terriers, aſcertaining the quantities of land in the occupation

of

of the leſſees of the Biſhops and Dignitaries,---and to the notorious ſpoil and plunder of the Church lands, during the confuſion and anarchy, preceding the Commonwealth, and, afterwards, by its connivance. Add, alſo, to theſe cauſes,---that the revenues of the Biſhops, in particular, ariſe from a variety of ancient fixed payments, (as the tenths of their Clergy, in many inſtances, forced upon them, in ſad exchange for their beſt and moſt deſirable eſtates,) from which they cannot deviate, and which, from the decreaſe in the value of money, have leſſened and dwindled away, comparatively, to nothing,---that the very nature of the tenures, by which the Epiſcopal and Dignified Clergy are compelled, by law, to leaſe their poſſeſſions, renders it impoſſible for them to derive any adequate advantage, either from rents reſerved in money or corn, or from the fines paid

for

for the renewals of their leaſes,---and, that the Epiſcopal and Cathedral Revenues are charged with various unavoidable deductions, in payments of ſalaries, penſions, &c. to many officers, and on many occaſions.

THE Deans and Chapters, with the ſeveral Cathedral members, have not been, for the foregoing reaſons, more fortunate in preſerving undiminiſhed the poſſeſſions, with which they were endowed at the Reformation, nor more ſucceſsful in improving the revenues of thoſe, which they ſtill enjoy, much beyond the ſame threefold proportion. They, like the Biſhops, are only tenants for life,---have experienced, as already ſaid, ſimilar loſſes from ſimilar cauſes,---and are under nearly the ſame reſtraints; ſo, that, though the endowments, originally granted to them, may amount in the King's Books, to full

40,000l.

40,000l. per annum, yet their annual incomes do not at preſent exceed, collectively, 140,000l. or 5,000l. each, on the average, as hath been before advanced. The revenues of thoſe Cathedrals, which are neither of the richeſt nor pooreſt claſſes, will bear teſtimony to the truth of this ſtatement. Nor, can it be reaſonably queſtioned by any one, who will take the trouble to make more particular and extenſive enquiries into the Cathedral incomes.

There are, it muſt be acknowledged, ſome noble and wealthy foundations, as Durham, Weſtminſter, Windſor, &c. but there are alſo a much greater proportion of others, originally poorly endowed, or ſubſequently impoveriſhed, as Saint Aſaph, Bangor, Carliſle, Cheſter, Saint David's, Landaff, Norwich, Peterborough, &c. &c. Beſides, ſome allowance ought to be made out of the foregoing amount of 40,000l.

on

on account of thoſe dignities, which are not endowed with any lands, or corpſes as they are called, and whoſe valuations are, notwithſtanding, included:---in particular, the Arch-Deaconries; one half of which appear to have no endowments annexed to them, and whoſe revenues muſt, therefore, ſolely proceed from the procurations of the Clergy, and from the fees of office, throughout their reſpective juriſdictions, and neceſſarily be incapable of improvement.

Moreover, as, in conſequence of no values being affixed to the dignities in the ſeveral Cathedrals of the new foundation, in the *Liber Regis*, (from whence, and the *Notitia Monaſtica*, the above mentioned ancient groſs valuation of the Cathedral property is collected,) on account of an annual rent-charge being paid by them in lieu of all firſt-fruits and tenths, it was neceſſary to adopt the value of the Prio-

ries,

ries, which on the ſuppreſſion were converted into the Cathedrals of Briſtol, Canterbury, Carliſle, Cheſter, Durham, Ely, Glouceſter, Norwich, Oxford, Peterborough, Rocheſter, Weſtminſter, Wincheſter, Windſor, and Worceſter,---and, as, in thoſe of Briſtol, Cheſter, Glouceſter, Oxford and Peterborough, new Biſhopricks alſo were founded out of, as it appears, the revenues of the Priories which were converted into their reſpective Cathedrals,---It is, therefore, to be preſumed, that the valuations, in the King's Books, of the ſeveral Sees of Briſtol, Cheſter, Glouceſter, Oxford and Peterborough, ought to be deducted out of the value of Saint Auſtin's at Briſtol, Saint Werburgh's at Cheſter, Saint Peter's at Glouceſter, Oſeney Monaſtery, and Peterborough Monaſtery: by which means, the before ſtated valuation of 40,000l. per annum, in the King's Books, will be conſiderably diminiſhed;

niſhed; and which diminution will aſſiſt, in accounting for the non-increaſe of the Cathedral Revenues, on the average in general, much beyond a three-fold proportion, ſince the time of Henry the Eighth.

According to an authenticated account, in *Camden's Britannia*, the Engliſh Dignified Clergy conſiſt of 26 Deans, 60 Arch-Deacons, and 544 other Cathedral Dignitaries,---in all, 630. Of this number, about one third are formed into 28 corporate bodies, called Deans and Chapters; and, being probably poſſeſſed of the largeſt ſhare of the groſs Cathedral revenues, are each member of them in the receipt of incomes, from 200l. to 1,000l. per annum, and, in a few inſtances, to a greater amount. The remaining two thirds of the dignitaries have, generally, little connexion with the Chapters or Capitular Bodies, but manage the peculiar concerns of their dignities,

nities, as Sole-Corporations, and are, moſt commonly, benefited by them with ſeparate incomes, from 20l. to 100l. per annum.

Excluſive of theſe dignitaries, there are, in every Cathedral, other members of an inferior nature and rank, under the denomination of Minor-Canons, Prieſt-Vicars, Vicars-Choral, &c. with many more in ſtill lower ſituations, all in holy orders, and whoſe total number amounts to nearly 300: theſe, as well as the ſuperior Cathedral members, have a portion of the collective Cathedral revenues, and, on the average, derive from their appointments, probably, annual incomes of about 50l. individually. And, in addition to theſe, there are alſo to be found, in every Cathedral, a far greater proportion, nearly 800 in the aggregate, of Lay-officers, in the capacities of Organiſts, Singing-men, Choriſters, Virgers, Sextons, &c.

with

with School-maſters, Free-ſcholars, Almſmen, &c. &c. :---all whoſe emoluments, though uſually inconſiderable, nevertheleſs, diminiſh the great funds of the Capitular Bodies, by whom they are paid.

And, thus, when it is ſaid, that the Cathedral Revenues, throughout the kingdom, amount to the groſs ſum of 140,000l. per annum, yet, let it be remembered, that there are, in all, not leſs than 1,700 perſons, who are partakers of thoſe revenues, in a greater or ſmaller proportion.

THE Parochial Clergy have been more fortunate and ſucceſsful, than either their Epiſcopal or Dignified Brethren. Their incomes, being chiefly dependent on the ſtate of landed property, whoſoever might be the poſſeſſors of it, have been neceſſarily more augmented, by the increaſed value of the rental of that property; and their rights and claims, not being of a fleeting nature, but

immoveably affixed to the ſoil of each pariſh, have ſuffered little diminution, except from the eaſineſs, inattention and neglect of the Clergy themſelves.

It appears from the *Liber Regis*, according to *Arch-Deacon Plymley in his Charge to the Clergy of Salop in the year* 1793, that ther eare, in England and Wales, 5,098 Rectories, 3,687 Vicarages, and 2,970 Churches which are neither Rectorial nor Vicarial, in all, 11,755 Churches, contained in about 10,000 pariſhes, at which number the pariſhes, throughout the kingdom, are uſually eſtimated.

Of theſe Rectories, many are, without doubt, highly valuable. The ſame may be ſaid in reſpect to ſome of the Vicarages, from being poſſeſſed of large glebes, or large endowments, or from both cauſes united, but, however, there are many Rectories, and Vicarages, in particular, whoſe tithes are wholly impropriated, and without even any

parſonage

parſonage houſe. Of the Churches, which are neither Rectorial nor Vicarial, perhaps, two fifths are merely Chapels of Eaſe, and appendant to ſome extenſive and valuable benefices, or elſe built on ſpeculation in populous parts of the kingdom, in which diſtricts they are chiefly to be found. And, of the remaining Churches, to which neither houſes, glebes, nor tithes moſt commonly belong, the incomes muſt neceſſarily be very inconſiderable, as they can alone proceed from trifling contingencies.

Indeed, there are numerous inſtances of ſo great a deficiency in the incomes ſet apart for the Parochial Clergy, either from the ſmall ſize of the pariſhes, or from the almoſt total deprivation of their revenues, that it hath been found abſolutely expedient to unite the incomes ariſing from two or three pariſhes, to produce an adequate maintenance to an officiating Miniſter,---who, it is greatly to be lamented, from being engaged

in the care of ſo many Churches, can ſcarcely find time to officiate properly in any one of them. And, this circumſtance will be the more credible, when it is recollected, that, at the eſtabliſhment of the Fund, called *Queen Anne's Bounty*, in the beginning of this century, for the augmentation of Poor Livings, there were 5,597 Livings, (conſiderably above one half of the whole number,) whoſe incomes did not exceed 50l. per annum, and were thus claſſed---

£.	LIVINGS.
Not exceeding 10	1071
..... 20	1467
..... 30	1126
..... 40	1049
..... 50	884
	5597

It muſt, however, be acknowledged, that, ſince the firſt augmentations took place, which

which were in the year 1714, the two claſſes, not exceeding 20l. per annum, have been completely augmented, by the ſums allotted from the Fund, and privately given, for that purpoſe,---that the augmentations are now extended to the third claſs, not exceeding 30l. per annum,---and that all the livings, in the whole five claſſes, have been increaſed in value, more or leſs, from the riſe of tithes, conſequent on the improved ſtate of lands and agriculture, though by no means in that juſt proportion, which they would ſtill bear without hardſhip or oppreſſion. It muſt, nevertheleſs, be equally acknowledged, that very few of the higheſt claſs of theſe livings are even now to be eſteemed ſuch an adequate proviſion, as to leave the Miniſters of them diſengaged from the ſolicitude of providing for themſelves and families. This is, indeed, an happineſs, which falls to the lot of a very ſmall portion of the Clergy, from the inſufficiency of their incomes in general!

But, notwithſtanding this inadequacy, it is very much to the credit of the Clergy of the Eſtabliſhment, that ſo few examples occur of their endeavouring to raiſe the incomes of their benefices, beyond an equitable ſtandard. This is an odium, which they do not generally deſerve, as hath been acknowledged by even thoſe, who are employed in effecting a change in the long-eſtabliſhed mode of their proviſion.

Sometimes, it is true, it unfortunately happens, that, though deſirous of continuing the peaceable Preachers of the Goſpel, they are compelled to have recourſe to the laws of their country, to enforce thoſe rights, with which their own ſupport and maintenance are moſt intimately connected, and from which they cannot recede without injuring their ſucceſſors. And, in vindication of the Clergy, it ought to be remarked, that, in all the various cauſes, introduced into the Courts of Law or Equity, in ſupport of their parochial

rochial dues, very few deciſions have been given againſt them; which undeniably proves, that they have not, arbitrarily or wantonly, hurried their adverſaries into expenſive and unneceſſary ſuits, but upon principles of ſelf-defence, and of juſtice towards their ſucceſſors.

In the preface to *Rayner's Collection of Tithe Caſes*, it is ſaid, that "Theſe ſheets "will convince all unbiaſſed readers, how "unjuſtly the Clergy have been charged "with a litigious diſpoſition, in having acted "contrary to the meekneſs and forbearance, "enjoined them in the Holy Goſpel, in ſuing "their pariſhioners for the recovery of their "tithes. It will appear by theſe papers, that "a Parſon has a right to appeal to the laws "of his country, for withholding his tithes "from him, be they of ever ſo inconſiderable "an amount. And, ſure, when the Clergy "have found their predeceſſors hardly treated by their pariſhioners, it became a duty

" to themſelves, their families and their ſuc-
" ceſſors, to ſue, even in oppoſition to the
" commands of the Goſpel, if ſuch proce-
" dure can be conſidered, as a diſobedience
" of the divine precept. Theſe ſheets will
" ſhew, that the hand of proud oppreſſion
" hath been exerted to deprive the Parſon of
" his due, and his pariſhioners encouraged
" to inſult him."

Again---" The reader will find the Parſon
" ſtruggling with becoming ſpirit againſt
" wealth, power and intereſt, ungenerouſly
" employed for the oppreſſive purpoſe of
" defeating him of his rights, by throwing
" every expence in his way, and all the ob-
" ſtacles ariſing from the law's delay; but
" that his opponents, though great in titles
" and honours, have been covered with
" ſhame, from a detection of the moſt mean
" and ſcandalous manœuvres, as would diſ-
" grace the pettifoggers of the law in chi-
" cane, duplicity, ignorance and oppreſſion."

Again

Again---" The moſt ſceptic reader muſt " be convinced, that the Rector demands " his tithes, as his legal property and inheri- " tance, of common right,---and the Vicar, by " virtue of his endowment, or by preſcrip- " tion or uſage: and that, conſequently, " they both have a moſt juſt, equal and ap- " parent claim to the coercion of the civil " power, to recover ſuch their lawful dues, " as much as any heir of the kingdom, when " the poſſeſſion or enjoyment of any part of " his paternal or other eſtate, is illegally " detained from him. So that, the popular " clamour raiſed againſt this reverend body " of men, cannot have originally proceeded " from a want of, or defect in their title to " ſuch demands; no, the very contrary hath " been the ſole cauſe of their injurious treat- " ment: for, the indiſputable clearneſs of " the Clergyman's title to tithes hath occa- " ſioned all the malevolent complaints made " againſt them; which have been propagated

" by

" by deſigning men, intereſted to vilify their " ſacred character, in order to conceal their " own iniquitous practices, for the ſhameful " purpoſe of cheating and robbing the Clergy " of the only ſubſiſtence provided for them, " and which is allowed them both by the " laws of God and man."

But, ſo far are the great body of the Clergy from exerciſing, to the utmoſt, the rights which are ſanctioned to them by the laws of the kingdom, that it muſt be granted by every man of candour, that they uſe them with becoming moderation,---that the compoſitions for tithes are paid, cuſtomarily, in proportion to rent, and not to real value, and, though different in different parts of the kingdom, are moſt commonly not unreaſonable,---and that, where the higheſt compoſitions are paid for great and ſmall tithes, they almoſt conſtantly take place in impropriate pariſhes, proceeding, from the Impropriators not having ſimilar reaſons with

the

the Clergy for lenity in their demands, and from the difficulty of ſettling the proportionable value of the tithes, belonging to the Impropriators, and to the Vicars of ſuch pariſhes, by which means, the landholders are liable to pay an increaſed compoſition for both. In thus vindicating the Clergy, indirectly, at the expence of the Impropriators, it is not meant to throw any ſtigma upon the Impropriators, becauſe, for the moſt part, they are not guilty of oppreſſion,---though it is to be feared, that ſome of them have not borne their faculties, in every inſtance, with ſo much meekneſs and ſelf-denial.

From the aggregate amount of the incomes of 3,181 livings, now and formerly in charge in the King's Books, ſituated in every county in the kingdom, and whoſe value hath been collected almoſt entirely within the laſt ten years, from various ſources of public and private information, it appears,---that each of theſe livings is now worth, on the

the average, 141l. per annum, and that, when compared with the value annexed to them in the King's Books, they have all increaſed in the *general* proportion of about ten to one, ſince the time of the Reformation;---but, that the Rectories have increaſed in the ratio of nearly eleven to one, and are at preſent of the yearly value of 162l. each,---and that the Vicarages have increaſed in the ratio of rather more than nine to one, and are at preſent of the yearly value of 106l. each. The number of Rectories, included in this calculation, is 2,037, and of the Vicarages 1,144:---the collective value of the former, in the King's Books, being 30,158l. and of the latter 13,379l.---and the collective value of the former, at preſent, being 330,754l. and of the latter 121,403l. per annum.

According, then, to the preſent average value of theſe Rectories and Vicarages, and to the number of the Rectorial, Vicarial

rial and other Churches throughout the kingdom, as before given from the *Liber Regis*, the revenues of the Parochial Clergy will be increaſed to the amount of 1,313,000l. per annum, as thus appears:---5,098 Rectories, at 162l. each, will give 825,876l.---3,687 Vicarages, at 106l. each, will give 398,222l.---And, 1,782 (that is, three-fifths of 2,970) Churches, which are neither Rectorial nor Vicarial, but are preſumed to be Parochial Cures, at---ſuppoſe the ample allowance of ---50l. each, will give 89,100l. And, when, to theſe ſums, are added the Epiſcopal, Cathedral and Univerſity revenues, amounting, as before ſtated, to 392,000l. per annum, it will be ſeen, that the Biſhop of Landaff's valuation of the Church and Univerſity Revenues, is exceeded, by the ſum of 205,000l.

But, it is not meant to fix the collective incomes of the Parochial Clergy, at the above mentioned ſum of 1,313,000l. per annum; as, from other data, they ſhall be extended

to

to a larger amount, in order to arrive, from the adoption of the medium between the laſt and enſuing calculation, at a more correct, and probably a true, ſtatement of them.

The value of a conſiderable number of livings hath been, very lately and accurately, aſcertained from the moſt undoubted authority. All theſe livings are ſituated in two counties, remote from each other,---the one inland, moderate in population, though rich and fertile in ſoil,---the other on the coaſt, full of inhabitants, and, though not naturally, yet by art, abundantly productive, with a variety of ports for the exportation of its produce. As theſe livings were not deſignedly ſelected, but taken promiſcuouſly, whether of ſmall or large amount, juſt as the real incomes of each could be collected, it is not unfair to aſſert, that, from the union of the value of livings in two counties, ſo diſtantly ſituated and ſo differently circumſtanced, the true and general average valuation of all the Rectories

tories and Vicarages, throughout the kingdom, may be very nearly, if not correctly, certified.

According to the average value of theſe Rectories and Vicarages, every Rectory is worth 193l. and every Vicarage 141l. per annum. And, thus, the collective incomes of the whole body of the Parochial Clergy will be materially enhanced, beyond the former computation,---as, 5,098 Rectories, at 193l. each, will amount to 983,914l.---3,687 Vicarages, at 141l. each, will amount to 519,867l.---and, 1,782 (preſumed) Parochial Cures, at 50l. each, will amount to 89,100l. ---all theſe together making, within a trifle, the annual ſum of 1,593,000l.;---which, with the addition of the revenues of the Biſhops, Dignitaries and Univerſities, at 392,000l. will exceed the laſt calculation, by about 279,000l. and the Biſhop of Landaff's valuation of the Church and Univerſity Revenues, by nearly 484,000l.

Let

Let it be obſerved, however, that, from certain peculiar and local circumſtances, (the diſcuſſion of which cannot be introduced here with any propriety,) in favour of the two counties, upon the baſis of whoſe average incomes of the Parochial Clergy, this general computation is formed, it may be ſuſpected, that the calculation of the incomes of the Parochial Clergy, throughout the kingdom, collectively, at 1,593,000l. per annum, is carried too high, and will, moſt aſſuredly, in many counties, in both England and Wales, be unhappily found ſo by the Beneficed Clergy.

This ſuſpicion is, probably, well grounded; but, as it hath been the profeſſed deſign of this Eſſay to arrive, as near as information and calculation will admit, at the real ſtate of the Eccleſiaſtical Revenues of this kingdom, it would have been inconſiſtent with ſuch a leading principle, to have withholden any apparent means of accurate inveſtigation.

tion. And, for the ſame reaſon, it is here added, that, when 50,000l. are deducted from the above ſum of 1,593,000l. for the annual value of the *Augmentation Lands* purchaſed by *Queen Anne's Bounty*, the remaining 1,543,000l. will ſeemingly prove, that the incomes of the Parochial Clergy, on the general average, have increaſed in the proportion of almoſt fourteen to one, ſince the Reformation, the valuation of all livings in the King's Books, formerly and at preſent in charge, and not annexed to any Epiſcopal, Cathedral or other dignity, (in whoſe valuations they are included,) amounting to 111,000l.

But, notwithſtanding, three computations have been here given of the value of the incomes of the Parochial Clergy, (from different data, poſſibly all collected within the laſt ten or fifteen years,) each ſtating them progreſſively higher, at 1,108,000l. 1,313,000l. and 1,593,000l. it

muſt not be imagined, that the Parochial Clergy have increaſed their revenues, within the ſame period, to the amount, of the largeſt difference, or about 485,000l. per annum; but, that the ſeveral calculations having proceeded upon more or leſs correct grounds, and having thereby created this apparently great improvement in ſo ſhort a ſpace of time,---therefore, the preſent collective income of the Parochial Clergy, ſetting the moſt fruitful againſt the moſt unproductive part of the kingdom, is, moſt probably, the medium between the higheſt and loweſt computations, and, in whole numbers, does not exceed 1,350,000l. per annum,---and that, when 50,000l. are deducted from this ſum for the value of the Augmentation Lands, (which could not have been included in the former valuation of Henry the Eighth,) the remainder will prove, that the income of the Parochial Clergy hath not increaſed,

ſince

ſince the Reformation, in a greater proportion than twelve to one: as twelve times 111,000l. (the valuation of all livings in the King's Books, now held by the Parochial Clergy,) amount to 1,332,000l.

It is neceſſary, likewiſe, to remark, that, in fixing the value of the Augmentation Lands at 50,000l. per annum, they have not been rated too high. The preſent *Biſhop of Durham*, who is, officially, a Governor of *Queen Anne's Bounty*, ſtates, in his before-cited *Letter to the Clergy of Sarum*, and with his uſual accuracy and correctneſs, the annual amount of that Fund at 15,000l. Out of this groſs ſum, it hath been ſuggeſted to me, 2,000l. per annum are, poſſibly, to be deducted, on account of various contingent expences, leaving a remainder of 13,000l. exactly equal to ſixty-five Augmentations of 200l. each.

The firſt allotment of Augmentations was made in the year 1714; ſince which

time, in a period of fourſcore years, 5,200 Augmentations ought to have taken place. According to *Burn*'s ſuppoſition in his *Eccleſiaſtical Law*, one half of theſe may have been effected, in conjunction with the Patrons and Incumbents of livings, or by the charitable aid of the benevolent and well-diſpoſed; (---and, in fact, 465 benefactions were given for this purpoſe, at 200l. each, between the years 1714 and 1735;---) but, here, they ſhall be eſtimated in the proportion of a fourth part only, and which will increaſe the number of Augmentations, by, as it were, the addition of 1,300, to 6,500 in the whole. Theſe, at 200l. each, will amount to the ſum of 1,300,000l. laid out in land; and which, granting the purchaſes (as we are aſſured by the *Biſhop of Durham*, they have been well made, in general,) to nett four per centum, will raiſe the amount of the annual value of the Augmentation Lands to 52,000l.

VARIOUS objections have been made to the ſilent operation of the inconſiderable, though benevolently deſigned Fund of *Queen Anne's Bounty*, which, it muſt not be forgotten, does not create any expence to the nation, but ariſes, principally, from a kind of tax or rent-charge, payable out of the chief Eccleſiaſtical Preferments in the kingdom. The objections, which are moſt inſiſted on, and are the only ones ſcarcely deſerving notice, are,---that, in a courſe of years, all the ſmall Freeholds will be virtually annihilated, by being converted into Church Lands, and, conſequently, thrown into a ſtate of mortmain, ---and, that the numerous claſs of little farmers will be materially injured in carrying on their occupations, through the want of tenements adapted to their finances, and by the cultivation of which, they are enabled, to live in a comparative ſtate of decency and comfort themſelves, and

to add to the plentiful ſubſiſtence of the neighbourhood around them.

Upon a preſumption, that the conſequences of the progreſſive improvement of the poor livings by *Queen Anne's Bounty*, will be the annihilation of the ſmaller freeholds,---I aſk,---Will that prove any loſs to the nation at large, or to the individuals of it? Without meaning to decry the utility of farms upon a moderately ſmall ſcale, or to abridge the comforts and conveniences of the numerous claſs of people to whom ſmall farms are adapted,---I aſk,---Are the freeholds, within the purchaſe of the allotments from this Fund, more particularly calculated to contribute to the national plenty, peace and proſperity? Are ſuch ſmall freeholds or farms better cultivated, than larger ones,---or, Do they yield a greater produce, in proportion to their ſize? Is not the reverſe, in both reſpects, more generally true?

And,

And,---Do they not ſerve greatly to increaſe, if not to occaſion, the confuſion and tumult of certain popular meetings, and the ſhameful inſtances of ſubſequent corruption and iniquity?

Moreover---Are not the *Proprietors* of ſuch ſmall freeholds, from the idea of having a landed property, too frequently tempted to be idle and extravagant?---and, if not, what degree of ſubſtantial aid, what more than mere credit, do they derive from ſuch ſmall poſſeſſions? Or---Are the *Renters* of them more happy, more comfortably circumſtanced, or more decently cloathed, than thoſe who, in the ſame rank of life, are only day-labourers, and renters of a cottage?---Do not the renters of ſuch inconſiderable tenements fare and work harder, to keep up external appearances, and to enable them to pay the high rents which are always demanded for, and the other outgoings which fall

ſo peculiarly heavy on, ſmall occupations?

But, if ſmall tenements or farms ſhould be thought neceſſary to the claſs of little farmers, and the advantage of the nation at large,---How is the number of them leſſened, becauſe the property of them is changed? Is it not a fact, that the operation of the Fund of *Queen Anne's Bounty* is ſo far from really leſſening the number of the ſmaller freeholds, that it acts as a great and moſt effectual mean of their preſervation, by preventing them from being ſwallowed up and conſolidated with the larger farms? And---Is it not a fact, alſo, that ſcarcely one in fifty of the freehold tenements, which are purchaſed to augment livings, is or can be bought in a ſituation, occupiable by the incumbents of the livings to which they are annexed? Are not ſuch ſmall freeholds, then, ſtill left open to the occupation of thoſe, whoſe

capitals

capitals they may ſuit, and who, from the vanity of being eſteemed land-holders, bind themſelves to the hardeſt labour, to inceſſant toil, and the ſcantieſt fare?

And, granting, that many ſmall freeholds have been taken out of the circulation of property, by the operation of the Fund, yet the number hitherto, compared with the whole maſs, is trifling, and cannot be, at preſent, injurious, or continue materially to increaſe, for any length of time. The income of the Fund is fixed, as well as the ſum allotted out of it for every Augmentation; and, from the inconſiderable amount of that ſum, and the great progreſſive riſe in the value of land, it cannot be a very diſtant period, before no freeholds will be found ſufficiently ſmall for the ſum to be laid out. The Augmentations will, therefore, be leſs productive, and leſs beneficial to the livings to which they are allotted; as the

Governors

Governors of the Fund, in whoſe poſſeſſion the appropriated allotments remain till they are veſted in land, never allow higher intereſt than two per centum, in order to induce Incumbents to ſeek out for purchaſes, and thereby increaſe the product of their Augmentations.

FROM the Revenues, let us paſs on to conſider the Number of the Eſtabliſhed Clergy---

They have been variouſly eſtimated, as much above 20,000, as below 15,000:--- a medium between both, or 18,000, is, moſt probably, the correcteſt ſtatement of them, as it will allow a Supernumerary or Curate to about one half of the before ſtated number of 11,755 Churches.

Theſe eighteen thouſand perſons, whether beneficed or expectant, with their families and dependents, make up, poſſibly, near 100,000 ſouls, reckoning at the

rate

rate of five and an half perſons to a family. However, as a part of the Clergy, like thoſe of other profeſſions, may be ſuppoſed to be ſingle men, this computation will, therefore, at firſt ſight, appear exaggerated; but, when it is conſidered, that the Clergy are an exception to thoſe of other profeſſions, and are, for the moſt part, married men, with numerous families in general, the calculation, in eſtimating the whole body of them with each a family of five and an half perſons, may turn out, neither raſh nor ill-founded:---and, more eſpecially, ſince, computing two thirds of them to be married men, with families and dependents of ſeven perſons each, the ſame groſs product will almoſt appear,--- as ſeven times twelve thouſand amount to 84,000, and the remaining one third, (or 6,000 ſingle men) with one dependent each, will make up the whole number to be 96,000.

And,

And, thus, taking the population of the kingdom at 8,000,000 of perſons, the Clergy, with their families and dependents, are about an eightieth part of the people.

It may be foreſeen, that, upon this compariſon of the number of the Clergy with the population of the kingdom, the adverſaries of our Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhment will immediately exclaim againſt the enormous portion of the national produce, appropriated to the maintenance of the Clergy, excluſive of their lands, glebes and other various emoluments:---A tenth part of the produce, for the ſupport of an eightieth part of the population!---A moſt unreaſonable and unneceſſary proportion, and a moſt indecent claim!!---And, the exaction of it, the extremity of extortion, rapacity and oppreſſion!!!

But, when the warm, compaſſionate, juſt and diſintereſted feelings of ſuch exclaimers

claimers are a little cooled and ſoftened, it may be ſuggeſted to them, that, though the Clergy of the Church of England are endowed, by the poſitive law of the kingdom, with a tenth part of the annual national increaſe from land and animals, yet they do not receive any thing equivalent to it,---as will moſt clearly appear, in the courſe of the enſuing Chapter.

Under the Jewiſh Theocracy, it hath been ſeen that the Prieſthood enjoyed, by Divine appointment, a revenue judged equal to a fourth part of the whole landed and animal produce of Judea, though the ſervice of the Prieſts was inconſiderable, and the relative proportion of their number to the body of the people, was only as one to forty-ſeven. If, then, the Jewiſh Prieſthood was endowed with an income, more than ten times as plentiful as that actually received by the Chriſtian Prieſthood in this kingdom, (which Prieſthood

hood is nearly equal in number to two thirds of the Jewiſh, or as ten to fifteen,) ---What juſt ground is there to queſtion or heſitate at the comparatively moderate eſtabliſhed revenues of a body of men, who have ten times more duty to engage in, and of whom infinitely more important and laſting qualifications are required for the due diſcharge of that duty,---- whoſe attention is, in general, confined to the ſpiritual welfare of the people committed to their charge,---who are, uſually, reaſonable in the compoſitions demanded in lieu of their legal dues,---and who bear their juſt and equitable proportion of all parliamentary and parochial taxes?

THE collective income of the Parochial Clergy, hath been ſaid to be very unequally divided:---that the annual value of twenty or thirty pariſhes, throughout the kingdom, may each amount to 1,000l.

or

or upwards,---of four or five hundred, to 500l. or upwards,---of fifteen hundred or two thouſand, to 200l. or upwards,---of three or four thouſand, to 100l. or upwards,---and, of four or five thouſand, to leſs than 100l.;---and, that, thus, the incomes of four fifths of all pariſhes do not exceed 200l. each, and that the largeſt proportion of theſe four fifths are under 100l. each per annum.

Were theſe incomes more equally apportioned, it hath been ſuggeſted,---that, ſuppoſing the number of Benefices to be ten thouſand, and that, where a Curate was admitted on a Benefice, he ſhould be endowed by law with a certain fixed and rateable proportion of its income, and not be permitted to leave that ſituation for an idle ſtate of life, the number of the Clergy would ſoon be materially leſſened, and that, conſequently, for the credit of the Church Eſtabliſhment, there would be a much

much better proviſion for the whole body thus reduced,---and that, if this proviſion ſhould be found ſtill incompetent, it might, with the greateſt eaſe and propriety, be augmented and made ſufficient, by the incomes of the Cathedral and Dignified Clergy; who, as it hath been further ſuggeſted, (except the Arch-Deacons,) ſeem to be of no eſſential ſervice to religion or the ſtate, and whoſe revenues might be thus appropriated to a better uſe, after deducting a certain ſum (at the rate, ſuppoſe, of 100l. each per annum,) for the ſixty Arch-Deacons, whoſe office, like the Epiſcopal, ought to be continued, on account of its great utility;---and that, by theſe means, not only the Drones of the Church (as, through an affectation of wit, the Dignified Clergy have been illiberally termed,) would be annihilated, but the real labourers, alſo, in the eccleſiaſtical vine-yard would be more comfortably ſupported.

This

This plan, of equalizing the parochial incomes, and of even adding to them at the expence of the Dignified Clergy, may carry a good and plauſible appearance in theory, though it is to be feared, that the benefit, to be hoped from the adoption of it, would not be realized in practice.

If a calculation be made, from either the medium or higheſt valuation of the annual parochial incomes, at 1,350,000l. or, at 1,593,000l. it will be ſeen, that, by the former, each living (ſtating the total number of pariſhes at 10,000,) would be worth 135l. and, by the latter, 159l. per annum,---and that, on a ſuppoſition of their being augmented by the appropriation of all the Cathedral Revenues, except an allowance of 6,000l. per annum for the ſixty Arch-Deacons, each living would receive a further increaſe of about 13l.:---ſo that, according to the valuation at which the parochial incomes are collectively

tively taken, every Pariſh Prieſt would enjoy, (through the addition of the Cathedral, and the equalization of the parochial incomes,) a revenue of 148l. or 172l. per annum.

But---Is an income of 172l. a year, adequate to the ſupport of a man with a family, who certainly ought to live in ſuch a decent and becoming ſtile, as will neither leſſen his character and profeſſion in the opinion of the world, nor neceſſarily deprive him of the means of exerciſing charity and hoſpitality? If it be ſufficient for theſe ends,---Is it ſufficient alſo for the education of a family, or is it poſſible to ſave out of it ſuch portions as are neceſſary for placing the members of that family, as they grow up, in a ſituation to maintain themſelves?

Beſides---How will the Clergy be materially reduced in number? As ten thouſand Benefices will always require ten

thouſand

thouſand Incumbents, we cannot ſuppoſe, that ſo many perſons will, without exception, inherit ſuch excellent conſtitutions, or, without remiſſion, enjoy ſuch health and ſtrength of body, as never to require aſſiſtance in the diſcharge of their reſpective duty. We, therefore, cannot imagine, but that, (unleſs, in conſequence of ſome ſecret cauſe derived from their holy profeſſion, the Clergy are exempted from the infirmities of human nature,) inſtances will continually occur of the impoſſibility of parochial duties being properly or at all diſcharged, without the conſtant intervention or temporary aid of Curates. And, if ſo---Is it unreaſonable to ſtate theſe fixed or occaſional aſſiſtants, at all times, in the proportion of one to every five or ſix Incumbents on the ſcore of inability,---to which muſt be added a very conſiderable number of others, probably full as many more, neceſſarily employed

in many hundred Benefices, on account of the extent of pariſhes, the heavineſs of duty, and the Chapels of Eaſe, which are ſo numerous in divers parts of the kingdom?

Stating, then, the annual income of all parochial benefices at the above computed higheſt valuation of 172l. each, every Incumbent would ſuffer, on the general average, a deduction of about 16l. per annum, from, poſſibly, one living in three (or 3,333 out of 10,000) being chargeable on various accounts with the annual ſtipend of a Curate at 50l. which would ſurely be a very moderate income for a man of liberal mind, manners and profeſſion, and a poor return for a long and expenſive education.

And, thus, at even the higheſt computation of the equalized incomes of the Parochial Clergy, and admitting the appropriation of the Cathedral Revenues, in order

order to their utmoſt augmentation, each living would not exceed 156l. per annum, upon the average.

It hath been objected by the adverſaries of the Church of England, that, to the great diſgrace and inefficacy of the Eſtabliſhment, men of the moſt ſhining abilities and moſt exemplary conduct are not always thoſe that proſper in the world, ---as, from an exceſs of ſenſibility, and a want of reſolution, too often incident to ſuch characters, being incapable of forwarding their own intereſts, they are for the moſt part neglected, and, if not left to pine in obſcurity and indigence, ſcarce ever arrive at a ſtate of competent eaſe and independency; --- whilſt others, leſs deſerving and leſs delicate in their applications, and their modes of purſuit, are far more ſucceſsful, in acquiring valuable preferments, and even the higheſt dignities.

It cannot be denied, that inſtances of this kind do, at times, occur, and give occaſion to hold up the poſſeſſors of eccleſiaſtical patronage, to cenſure and reproach. Yet, the apparent neglect of deſerving men is not to be attributed, in general, to the inattention or private intereſt of patrons, but is to be aſcribed to a more extenſive and more deeply-rooted cauſe,---the incompetency of the Church to provide for all her ſons; amongſt whom, the meritorious being much more numerous than the preferments of value ſhe hath to beſtow, many of them muſt, of neceſſity, go without a ſufficient reward and equal to their merits. And, though this may be one of thoſe bad effects, which the violent partizans of Church Reformation ſtrenuouſly maintain to be, ſo plainly and immediately, deducible from the unequal diviſion of the eccleſiaſtical revenues,---in the opinion of others, equal in reſpectability

lity and ſuperior in credibility from the great majority of numbers, this inequality is proper in itſelf, and is attended with many conſiderable advantages in its conſequences, ſuch as far outweigh every oppoſite intereſt.

The Author of *The Wealth of Nations*, who, from early cuſtom and national prejudice, cannot be preſumed to have been friendly to Religious Eſtabliſhments on any large ſcale, yet ſays, that "Though "Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhments might have "firſt originated from religious views, "they prove in the end advantageous to "the political intereſts of ſociety:"---that, "In England, and in all Roman Catholic "countries, the lottery of the Church is "much more advantageous than neceſ-"ſary:"---and that, "The great Bene-"fices and other Eccleſiaſtical Dignities "ſupport the honour of the Church, not-"withſtanding the mean circumſtances of "ſome of its inferior members."

If any credit may be given to the ſentiments of this writer, and of many others of a ſimilar way of thinking, the unequal diviſion of the Revenues of the Church of England, and the utility of that part of its eſtabliſhment, which comprehends the Dignified Clergy, may be juſtly defended;---and it may be as juſtly doubted, whether the equalization of the incomes of the Parochial Clergy, even in the moſt improved condition of them, and the abolition of all Cathedral Dignities, would not prove highly detrimental to the intereſts, primarily, of Religion, and, eventually, of the State. This, at leaſt, is certain, that, in aboliſhing all dignities in the Church, we ſhould, at the ſame time, check in the minds of the Clergy in general, all ſenſe of emulation amongſt them, and all deſire of intellectual improvement, when they ſaw, that there were no ſuperior emoluments to be beſtowed upon perſons of ſuperior talents, more cultivated

vated abilities, and more exemplary conduct, than upon thoſe of inferior qualifications, leſs profeſſional knowledge, and leſs conſpicuous merit.

And the conſequences of an abolition of the dignified and valuable appointments in the Church, would be felt, as ſoon and as much, as if all the great officers of the State, entruſted with the government of the nation, were reduced to the ſame rank and ſalary with their clerks; and as if all the Generals, Admirals and ſuperiors in the army and navy, were blended into one common maſs with the ſubalterns, without any nominal or pecuniary diſtinction.

Beſides---The equalization of the incomes of the Parochial Clergy, would gradually drive all men of rank, character, and ability, out of the ſervice of the Church. For, who would willingly enter into it, on the proſpect of reaping no greater income than 156l. per annum?---

when,

when, in trade or any other profeſſion, with the aſſiſtance of a few hundred pounds only, they might eſtabliſh themſelves, (without ſuch a loſs of time, or ſuch an expence in education, as is indiſpenſibly requiſite for the Clerical profeſſion,) in a line of life far more lucrative and independent, and which, from want of ſucceſs, they might decline, and improve their circumſtances, by a change in their occupation.

Lord Coke ſays, "The law hath great "policy in preſerving the clerical pro-"perty; for the decay of revenues of "men of holy church in the end will be "the overthrow of the ſervice of God and "his religion: for none will apply themſelves or their ſons, or any other whom "they may have in charge, to the ſtudy "of divinity, when they ſhall have, after "long and painful ſtudy, nothing to live "upon."

That

That men of the firſt literary abilities are, at preſent, amongſt the ſervants of the Eſtabliſhed Church, is acknowledged by thoſe, who are ſtudious to decry the education of youth, in the Univerſities of Cambridge and Oxford,---who complain, that, if either of thoſe Univerſities, or of the Colleges in them, ſhould chance to enjoy the benefit of an able Profeſſor or competent Tutor, it is only a temporary and ſhort advantage, as the emoluments of the Church quickly draw them from thoſe ſituations; whilſt, in other Univerſities, whoſe National Churches are more ſcantily endowed, this does not happen: their Profeſſors and Tutors ſeldom quit their Chairs, as they cannot find themſelves more comfortably ſituated, in point of emolument, than within the walls of their own ſeminaries. And, that men of the firſt rank and families, alſo, are employed in the ſervice of the Eſtabliſhed Church,

Church, is evident from the number of them continually ordained into it.

If either of theſe two deſcriptions of men ſhould find themſelves neceſſitated, by any alteration in the Eſtabliſhment, to decline the ſervice of the Church, its offices would, conſequently and inſenſibly, devolve upon thoſe of meaner abilities and ſituations in life, to whom the emoluments of the Church, even upon a reduced plan, might ſtill prove a ſufficient inducement to undertake the duties of it:---and, what, in proceſs of time, would be the ſtate of Religion, in theory and practice, when upheld by Preachers who would gradually become too mean and contemptible to do any good, requires no great penetration or foreſight, in thoſe who "underſtand the uſe of Religion in "enforcing Morality, and the uſe of "good Morals in ſecuring the Welfare "of the Community."

In

In ſhort---To uſe the expreſſions of the before cited *Letter of the Biſhop of Landaff to the Arch-Biſhop of Canterbury*, if there were no Dignified Eſtabliſhment, and no valuable preferments in our National Church, "Thoſe who are now bred to the "Church, would apply their money, their "time and their talents in ſome other "way: and there are few ways, in which "they might not be able to procure for "themſelves, and for their families, as "good, or a better proviſion, than they "at preſent derive from the Church. We "ſee in the courſe of every century, a "great many ample fortunes accumulated, "and obſcure families ennobled, by the "profeſſion of the law, by the army, by "the navy, and by commerce; but it is a "rare thing indeed to ſee a Churchman, in "conſequence of his profeſſion, lifting his "poſterity above the common level, either "in rank or fortune. And, yet, there can

"be

" be no preſumption in ſuppoſing, that " men, brought up to the Church, have as " ſound underſtandings, as thoſe brought " up to the Bar; the ſame induſtry, ge- " nius or ability of any kind, which con- " tribute to place a man on the Bench of " Biſhops, might, if they had been di- " rected into another channel, have placed " him on the Bench of Judges; and he, " whoſe head is covered with an Archi- " epiſcopal mitre, might have been " adorned with the more ſubſtantial and " permanent honours uſually conferred on " a Lord High Chancellor."

BUT---It hath been further urged by the advocates of the ſyſtem for equalizing the Revenues of the Parochial Clergy, and augmenting them with the Cathedral Revenues, that, if, in ſuch an improved ſtate, each living ſhould not turn out an adequate object of purſuit and compenſation

penſation to every man of rank, character, and abilities,---nevertheleſs, the livings would be an ample ſufficiency, when compared with the preſent incomes of the majority of the Clergy,---that they would be more than double in value to the ſalaries of the Miniſters of the Kirk of Scotland, ---and that they would far exceed thoſe of the Clergy in the Proteſtant Swiſs Cantons, where the ancient Revenues of the Church have been appropriated, not only to the ſervice of Religion, but to the ſupport of the State alſo.

Though it be true, that 156l. per annum is a greater income, than the majority of the Engliſh Clergy at preſent enjoy, it does not argue, that ſuch a ſum is a ſufficiency,---and, though it be more than double in value to the ſalaries of the Miniſters of the Kirk of Scotland, and may exceed thoſe of the Proteſtant Clergy in Switzerland, it does not prove, that a larger

larger income is unneceſſary, or that an income of 156l. a year would be capable of drawing proper perſons into the ſervice of the Church. It may, however, be requiſite to pay rather more than a paſſing attention to the objection raiſed on the comparative incomes of the Scottiſh Clergy,---ſince many cheriſh the idea of new modelling the Church of England, particularly in reſpect to her Revenues, after the plan of the Kirk of Scotland, though it may be fairly queſtioned, whether they have conſidered the conſequences of putting ſuch a ſcheme in execution.

It is a principle of natural reaſon and juſtice, that the recompenſe of every ſervice ſhould be ſuitable and apportioned to the nature of that ſervice; which ſhould be rewarded, neither in an exceſſive nor penurious manner, as, in either caſe, the cauſe which requires thoſe ſervices, and the continuance of them, may ſuffer,

though

though from different effects. If ſervices are compenſated at too high a rate, the receivers of the emoluments of ſuch over-valued labours, may be induced to think of themſelves, and their ſervices, more highly than they ought to think, and, from being led into an opinion and falſe eſtimate of their own importance, may give themſelves up to inattention, idleneſs and neglect:---and, if ſervices are, on the other hand, inadequately and too ſcantily compenſated, the receivers of ſuch inſufficient rewards will be ſecretly diſinclined to, and imperceptibly drawn from, the continuation or due diſcharge of thoſe ſervices; of courſe, others muſt be placed in their ſituations, to whom ſuch inadequate compenſations are acceptable, but, from whoſe preſumptive meanneſs and incapacity, evil conſequences, in proportion to the importance of the ſervice, muſt be expected unavoidably to enſue. If theſe

poſitions are well founded and applicable to any ſervice, they are moſt aſſuredly true, and may be fully applied to Religion, and to the ſervices of its Miniſters.

Let us ſee, then, in what manner they affect the Kirk of Scotland, though without the moſt diſtant intention of making any invidious compariſon.

It hath been ſaid, by writers of that country and communion, that "The moſt "opulent Church does not maintain bet- "ter the uniformity of faith, the fervour "of devotion, the ſpirit of order, regularity "and auſtere morals in the great body "of the people, than the poorly endowed "Church of Scotland:---all the good "effects, both civil and religious, which "an Eſtabliſhed Church can be ſuppoſed "to produce, are produced by it as com- "pletely, as by any other."

If this ever were an exact portrait of the Kirk of Scotland, its leading features muſt

muſt be conſiderably changed in the preſent day. For, if a general judgement be formed of the ſtate of Religion, the ſituation of the Miniſtry, and the Morals of the People, from many portions of the *Statiſtical Accounts of Scotland* lately publiſhed, and from other publications in relation to the internal police of Scotland, it will not be quite clear and ſatisfactory to every cloſe enquirer, that the ſame good effects, both civil and religious, now flow ſo plentifully from its poor Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhment.

The whole proviſion of the Miniſters of the Kirk of Scotland was eſtimated, about forty years paſt, in the year 1755, at about 68,500l. per annum; which, being divided between 944 Miniſters, afforded to each of them, on the average, an annual income of 72l. This proviſion may, indeed, have been increaſed; but, nevertheleſs, whatever it may be now, it appears, from the

foregoing authenticated publications, to be daily growing of leſs and leſs eſtimation, and ſcarcely an object of deſire. It is ſo incompetent to the decent and comfortable maintenance of the preſent Miniſtry, notwithſtanding the great cheapneſs of the neceſſaries of life in Scotland, when compared with the prices of them in England, that not only the Miniſters themſelves complain and are uneaſy in their ſituations, but their unpleaſant and confined circumſtances are ſo obvious, that the youth of reſpectable families and connections are prevented and deterred from entering, as formerly, into the Miniſtry.

The conſequences of this have been, that thoſe of inferior families and ſituations in life have been already candidates for, and have been neceſſarily ordained into the Miniſtry, from the mere want of others, of more reſpectable connections, and more qualified by education and profeſſional

ſtudies.

ſtudies. From time to time, even this claſs of the people will withdraw themſelves, (as views of bettering their conditions in the commercial line, or ſome lucrative employment, continue to preſent themſelves before them,) and others of ſtill leſs character, conſequence and qualifications, will be brought forward, and, (though ill calculated to further the purpoſes of religion,) muſt through neceſſity be introduced into its offices. And, thus, will the poverty of the Scottiſh Eſtabliſhment prove its moſt deadly foe, and, in the event, in all likelihood, work its ruin; as all the good effects, both civil and religious, which have been deduced from it, will gradually vaniſh.

In the hurry, confuſion and violence, with which the reformation of the Church of Scotland was attended, and by which it was chiefly effected, though many things were done, for which the Reformers themſelves

ſelves were afterwards ſorry, yet, in no inſtance, did they more regret the conſequences of their conduct, than in reſpect to the Revenues of the Church, and the abolition of Tithes. And, probably, the regret of the Reformers aroſe, in the cooler moments of reflection, from a conviction, of the inſtability and laſting efficacy of a poorly endowed Eſtabliſhment, and of the evils reſulting from the deſtruction of a material ſource of connection between a Miniſter and his pariſhioners.

In confirmation of the progreſſive decay of the Kirk of Scotland, from the ſeceſſion of the youth of the beſt families and qualifications from the Miniſtry, on account of the ſcantineſs of the proviſion allotted for its ſupport, may be adduced, from the foregoing ſtatiſtical publication, the rapid inſtance which the pariſh of Kincardine, in the county of Perth, furniſhes. We are informed, that, in this pariſh, the

number

number of ſtudents, particularly in divinity, was, at one time very conſiderable. About eighteen years ago, there were eighteen Clergymen, (including every denomination,) natives of this pariſh: they are, now, reduced to four; and there are only two ſtudents. The great increaſe in the expence of education, and the emoluments of the profeſſion being nearly ſtationary, while, in almoſt every other line of life, they are increaſing with an aſtoniſhing rapidity, are evidently, the author obſerves, the cauſes of this alteration. A ſpinner of cotton, in the ſecond year after leaving the plough, gains annually a ſum equal to the average ſtipends of the Miniſters of the Church of Scotland, which are the recompenſe held forth, for an expenſive education of fifteen years at leaſt, and for many more, perhaps, of anxious expectation.

Thus, then, does the new modelling the revenues of the Church of England,

after the plan of the Kirk of Scotland, appear, upon examination, an incompetent and dangerous meaſure. And,

As to the revenues of the Parochial Clergy in the Proteſtant Swiſs Cantons, and the appropriation of the ancient poſſeſſions of the Swiſs Church, to the ſervice of the State as well as of Religion, it may be doubted, whether the adoption of a ſimilar ſcheme in England would be practicable, or, if practicable, whether it would not prove prejudicial to Society, by weakening the credit, and by leſſening the influence of Religion, in the perſons and ſituations of its Miniſters.

In ſo poor and cheap a country, as Switzerland, in which a luxurious, or an extravagant mode of living is generally reprobated, and in which every habit of induſtry and frugality may be uſually obſerved amongſt all ranks of people,---though the incomes of the Parochial Clergy may be ſmall, they may, never-

nevertheleſs, be fully adequate to a decent and comfortable maintenance and independence, according to the faſhion and cuſtom of that country. Nor, is it fair to inſinuate the ſame hopes and wiſhes in England, becauſe, that, in Switzerland, after allowing a proviſion for their Miniſters of Religion, out of the ancient poſſeſſions of their Church, there ſtill remains a great overplus for the ſupport of the poor. For, let it be recollected, that the whole patrimony of the Church in the Swiſs Cantons which renounced Popery, was converted into a Fund for theſe purpoſes, and muſt produce a very large annual return,---and that the number of the actual poor muſt be inconſiderable, in a country, where all are brought up to provide for their own maintenance, and where every one, capable of earning a ſubſiſtence, is not permitted to live in idleneſs, and at the expence of the State. Whilſt,

on

on the contrary, in England, the ſituation of the Church, the ſtile of living, the price of proviſions, and the number and condition of the poor, are ſo materially different, as almoſt to deny, not only the poſſibility of any juſt compariſon, but of any compariſon at all.

The *undiminiſhed* Revenues, which the Church of England enjoyed previous to the Reformation, might, indeed, be fully adequate to the ſame good works in this kingdom, as they are in Switzerland. But, when it is remembered, how much the Revenues of our Church have been reduced, there is no reaſonable ground to form ſuch expectations from them, at this time. At, and ſince, the Reformation, our Church hath been deprived of, at leaſt, two thirds of her poſſeſſions, if we may believe what we are told, by ſeveral ancient and modern writers; which two thirds, according to the before ſtated collective

lective incomes of the preſent Epiſcopal, Dignified, and Parochial Clergy, would now be worth upwards of three millions ſterling per annum, and, poſſibly, a much larger ſum; as the poſſeſſions, which have been taken away from the Church, have invariably conſiſted of her moſt valuable property in lands and tithes, but, chiefly, of the former.

Three millions ſterling, however, are more than equal to the yearly maintenance of the poor of the whole kingdom at this time, allowing even for a great increaſe of expence, ſince the laſt enquiry was made into the annual amount of the poor-rates:---a tax, which bears hard upon every deſcription of people, and whoſe diminution, or annihilation, were it poſſible, would obviate one of the moſt common ſources of national complaint. But, to propoſe the accompliſhment of it, after the example of the Proteſtant Swiſs Cantons,

Cantons, out of the preſent diminiſhed Revenues of the Church, (and which are already chargeable, in juſt proportion, to the maintenance of the poor, and to all other parochial taxes,) would be moſt oppreſſive, and, in fact, impracticable---For, though the Church may ſtill be in poſſeſſion of a conſiderable income, in the aggregate, yet, ſhe hath a number of ſons and dependents to maintain, and whoſe ſituations, in general, bear the ſtrongeſt teſtimony to the truth of an aſſertion, uſually aſcribed to the late *Lord Chatham*, that "The Church, God bleſs "it, hath but a pittance."

THE partizans of Church Reformation, yet, go on to ſay,---If the incomes of the Parochial Clergy be not equalized, however, let all thoſe Cathedral dignities and diſtinctions be aboliſhed, from which ſuch large revenues are derived, for no apparent

rent ſervice whatever,---and, if theſe Cathedral revenues are not converted to the uſe of the Parochial Clergy, they may be appropriated to ſome charitable and pious uſes:---for inſtance, they may be given to the kingdom, at large, in aid of the poor-rates,---or, they may be made a fund for the maintenance of the widows and orphans of the Clergy,---or, elſe, they may be applied to the benefit of the State, to whom all thoſe eccleſiaſtical rights and poſſeſſions, which are now judged uſeleſs or inexpedient, ought in equity to revert; ſince all the property of the Church, whether in lands or tithes, hath been really derived from the State, and ſince, by the reſumption of the whole, the State would only gain re-poſſeſſion, of that which originally belonged to her.

Enough hath been already ſaid to ſhew, that the ſuggeſted plans, of an alteration in the diſpoſal of the Eccleſiaſtical Revenues,

nues, would not materially benefit the Parochial Clergy of this kingdom, and that the political advantages, which are ſo plauſibly, warmly and earneſtly holden forth, in the defence and recommendation of ſuch plans, would, in all human probability, be converted into very oppoſite effects,---into evils of a moſt dangerous tendency to Religion and Society. However, the ſcheme of aboliſhing the Dignified Clergy ſeems to be the moſt favourite notion of modern eccleſiaſtical reformers,---and, if they could bring it to paſs, they would regard, neither the means, nor the conſequences of doing it, nor how the application of the revenues of ſuch Dignified Clergy, would anſwer the purpoſes they intend by it.

Thus, when they ſay---Let the revenue of the Dignified Clergy be given in aid of the poor-rates throughout the kingdom, they do not conſider, that, when all the

neceſſary

neceſſary deductions are made, for the conſtant inſpection over ſuch a ſcattered property from whence that revenue is derived, for collecting the income ariſing from it, and for remitting the nett produce of it in due proportion to each pariſh,---ſo very conſiderable a ſhare of that revenue would unavoidably ſink into the pockets of the agents thus employed in the management of it, that there would ſcarcely be found a pariſh relieved or aſſiſted, in any important degree, by the allotted portion of it---

Thus, when they ſay---Let the revenue of the Dignified Clergy be converted into a fund for the maintenance of the widows and orphans of the Clergy, they ſecretly applaud themſelves for the wiſdom and propriety of the propoſal,---as the Clergy, they think, cannot ſurely object to it, when they reflect, that, in caſe of their own deaths, a more ample proviſion will be made

made for their widows and children, and who may, thus, enjoy, perhaps, a more comfortable maintenance than could be drawn from a ſmall living, and may, by this mean, receive a comparative alleviation of ſorrow, at the loſs of an huſband, a parent, and a protector. Though it muſt be acknowledged, that the end of this propoſal is benevolent and humane, yet it is ſomewhat too like demanding a very extravagant price for the neceſſaries of life from a man in his lifetime, in order to beſtow, at ſome future period, a part of the produce of ſuch extortion, on his widowed wife and fatherleſs children,--- thus preventing him from ſharing, in his own perſon, in all the good things, to which his occupation might entitle him, and its undiminiſhed profits enable him to procure. But, with all grateful acknowledgement of the munificence of the Laity, and with all due praiſe to the Clergy

them-

themſelves, there is ſcarcely a neceſſity of ſo great and hazardous a ſacrifice, for the eſtabliſhment of ſuch a fund. The various noble public charities, ſupported by both the Laity and Clergy, and the very conſiderable provincial ſubſcriptions made annually throughout the kingdom, chiefly, by the Clergy themſelves, afford, though not an ample, yet a moderate relief, to the widows and orphans of the Church;---hardly an inſtance of neglect or omiſſion occurs, even of thoſe who are not ſo worthy of aſſiſtance;---widows, for the moſt part, are decently ſupported by theſe charities and ſubſcriptions;---and their children, when arrived at proper ages, are placed out, by the ſame charitable funds, in ſuitable lines of life, in order to maintain themſelves in due time, and not remain a conſtant burthen on ſociety---

And, thus, when the Church Reformiſts proceed, to ſay---Let the Revenue of the

Dignified Clergy be applied to the benefit of the State, and, to aſſert, that the property of the Church is the property of the State, which, according to them, may and ought to be reſumed, whenever the neceſſities of the State required it, or the continuance of that property, in the poſſeſſion, and for the uſe of the Church, ſhould be deemed inexpedient, they moſt plainly inſinuate their wiſhes, and directly recommend the execution of ſuch a project. And, it is not uncharitable to preſume, that they would probably aſſiſt, with a willing heart and ready hand, in ſuch an iniquitous and ſacrilegious plunder,---and that, rather than forego the accompliſhment of their views, they would even riſk ſome degree of danger to their own property and rights; which, however, they would endeavour to ſecure from depredation and infringement, by the adoption of thoſe very meaſures of protection,

tection, which they will not allow to the perſons they attack.

It is very difficult to trace the origin of the idea, that the property of the Church is the property of the State, and that the public hath a right to reſume the poſſeſſion of it.

Upon a ſuppoſition, that the property of the Church was originally a donation from the State, yet it does not appear, upon what grounds, the State can found a right to reclaim it. Or, admitting that there was any foundation for the ſuppoſition,---Does the act of giving imply the right of reſumption alſo? The gifts of private individuals, between man and man, are eſteemed ſo valid and permanent, as not to admit the ſhadow of a reſumptive plea:---Why, then, is the great individual, the Community, to be inveſted with a privilege, in direct oppoſition to thoſe very laws, by which ſhe binds all her members in their private capacities? Or,

---Is it, becauſe ſhe is the depoſitary of the ſupreme power, and is, therefore, able to enforce her will,---though the execution of it may be moſt unjuſt and dangerous? If ſo,---is not ſuch a mode of proceeding very analogous to the common proverb of, "Might overcoming right?"

But, in reſpect to the Church lands, the State never had any connexion with or intereſt in them, as they have been almoſt entirely derived, from the voluntary, pious and munificent donation of Kings, Nobles and others, their original proprietors, and have been always conſidered, as a diſtinct and inalienable property. And, in reſpect to tithes, the State never had any claim upon them, or ever had them in her poſſeſſion:---they aroſe from the ſame liberal ſource, as the Church lands, and, from the firſt origin of them in this kingdom, have been conſtantly appropriated to the ſupport of religion; and, ſo far hath the State been from aſſerting a right to them

at

at any period, that ſhe hath, by various poſitive laws, ſettled them on her Clergy, as their portion and inheritance for ever.

It is attempted to aſſiſt and ſtrengthen the argument, in favour of a reſumption of our Church property, by the late example of France, though it will not gain any great or creditable ſupport from the compariſon:---France, it will be ſaid, hath abſolutely annihilated all the property of the Church, by the ſale of its lands, and by the abolition of tithes, and hath fixed the maintenance of the Pariſh Prieſts, (who, with the Biſhops, did alone remain, lately, of all her numerous Clergy,) at certain determinate ſalaries, payable out of the public treaſury.

It is granted, that, during the preſent raging paroxyſm of inſanity, under which that nation labours, ſuch things have been done; but, however, it does not follow,

that ſuch alterations are juſtifiable, or will be finally eſtabliſhed.

Of the immediate conſequences of them, a judgement may be already formed, by a peruſal of the accounts, detailed in our own diurnal publications, from the authorized French prints. And, a ſmall knowledge of them will convince the moſt prejudiced and obſtinate, if open to conviction, that, in the annihilation of their revenues, the French Convention or National Aſſembly, virtually, annihilated the Clergy, and, in their deſtruction, worked the deſtruction of religion alſo,---and that, (in conſequence of the people being freed from all religious influence and reſtraint,) vice, prophaneneſs and immorality ſtalk boldly, without diſguiſe and in every ſhape, amongſt all ranks, and without either ſhame or remorſe in thoſe who are moſt notorious for them,---that infidelity is no longer a term of reproach, but a

cauſe

cauſe of triumph and exultation, --- and that, in further proof of the height to which human depravity can aſcend, even Atheiſm hath erected a ſtandard, whoſe principles can ſcarcely fail of being fondly received by the bulk of the nation, after having been ſo warmly, indecently and audaciouſly avowed in their public aſſemblies, and, to their everlaſting infamy, flattered and applauded by their Legiſlators.

It is, indeed, impoſſible to reflect upon the late and prevailing conduct of France, without the moſt painful ſenſations, without horror and diſguſt, --- and without breathing the moſt fervent wiſhes, that this nation may ever eſcape ſimilar wickedneſs, miſery and puniſhment! And, as it is equally impoſſible to foreſee the whole conſequences of a ſpirit of innovation, the people of Great Britain, in every rank and ſituation in life, ſhould be "conſcious of

" the bleſſings of a free government, and " ſhould be well aware, how very little " they have to gain, and how very much " to loſe, by any revolution."

But to return---To offer any compariſon between the preſent ſtate of the Eſtabliſhment of the Church of England, and the ſtate of the Gallican Church, previous to the depending revolution, is unfair and ungrounded; becauſe, though the name of an Eſtabliſhed Church was applicable to both, yet, in point of doctrine, conſtitution, and revenue, they were moſt eſſentially different.

The Church of France was, in faith, practice, and eſtabliſhment, in a ſimilar or more depraved ſtate, than the Church of England, prior to the Reformation. Her faith was corrupt, and unwarranted from Scripture;---by teaching for doctrines the fancies and commandments of men, ſhe had adulterated the pure word of

the

the Goſpel, the true knowledge of which was not to be acquired by the great maſs of the people, from being denied the free uſe of the Scriptures, in their native tongue. Her conſtitution, and the application of her revenues, were not leſs reprehenſible;---though poſſeſſed of an immenſe income, poſſibly, much larger in compariſon than the Clergy ever enjoyed in England, during the time of Popery,---and though it might have been proportionably adapted to the number of the Clergy who ought to have been partakers of it, yet the Religious Houſes conſumed the greateſt portion: the real Clergy, whether epiſcopal, dignified, or parochial, divided only a comparatively moderate ſhare amongſt them. Beſides, all her valuable preferments, and thoſe, in general, were of a ſecular nature, were diſpoſed of, in proportion to their value, in favour of noble Family-intereſts, or of recommendations

mendations from the Nobility,---and, according as theſe appointments were more or leſs an object of purſuit, ſo, on the attainment of them, were their peculiar duties, proportionably neglected, or inattentively committed to the care of others.

On the contrary, the Church of England, neither teaches corrupted doctrines, nor inſtils corrupt practices;---ſhe does not deny her members the free uſe of the Scriptures in their vernacular language, or the liberty of examining, illuſtrating and explaining them;---ſhe, ſince the Reformation, poſſeſſes no immenſe income, but a bare ſubſiſtence for her Clergy individually;---ſhe hath no Religious Houſes to partake of her revenues, nor ſecular preferments to beſtow on the idle and the negligent;---all her ſons, employed in her offices, are, with few exceptions, ever intent upon their appropriate duties, and

would

would be ſtill more diligent in the diſcharge of thoſe duties, were each of them poſſeſſed of a more enlarged and comfortable independence, and furniſhed with more ſuitable places of abode.

The preſent ſtate, then, of the Engliſh Eſtabliſhment precludes all ground of juſt compariſon, with the late Eſtabliſhment of the Church of France. And the drawing and ſpreading of ſuch compariſons cannot be defended; as they are founded on erroneous principles, and are calculated to introduce an unjuſtifiable and dangerous experiment. But, in the words of the *Biſhop of Landaff*,---"No man ſhould en-
"viouſly regard the property of the
"Church, or conſider it as the hereditary
"poſſeſſion of any particular claſs of peo-
"ple. The property of the Church, is,
"indeed, the real property of thoſe who
"at preſent poſſeſs it, but it may be
"eſteemed the reverſionary property of
"every family in the kingdom; it is
"ſomewhat

" ſomewhat that every man hath a title
" to, over and above that which he can
" produce his parchments for. Look at
" the poſſeſſors of Biſhopricks, Deaneries,
" Prebends, Rectories, and all other emo-
" luments of the Church, and you will
" find them deſcended from the Nobility,
" the Gentry, the Commonalty, from all
" ranks, profeſſions and orders of the State.
" I ſay, again, the property of the Church
" ought to be conſidered, as the property
" of the Kingdom at large; I do not mean,
" inaſmuch as it is a part of the king-
" dom, which is given to the Church by
" the common or ſtatute law of the king-
" dom; but as the individuals who enjoy
" it, are or may be, in a ſucceſſion of
" years, taken from every family in the
" kingdom."

The Church Reformers, unwilling to give up their favourite ſcheme of an alteration or reduction in the preſent Eſtabliſhment,

liſhment, yet ſtart an objection, in the following terms---

In the earlieſt days of Chriſtianity, they ſay, the poor were maintained out of the Church-ſtock, which practice was not of ſhort duration, but prevailed more or leſs through a great many ſubſequent ages: at firſt, it was enjoined by the Church, in conformity to the apoſtolic uſages; but, when the Clergy became inveſted with a legal right to tithes, it was then ſanctioned by civil authority alſo: the poſſeſſion, therefore, of tithes by the Clergy, to their own ſeparate uſe, muſt have been obtained by improper means, and confirmed only by the forbearance of the Laity: and the continuance of it defrauds the poor of their right, and throws an unneceſſary burthen on the community.

Though theſe premiſes may be in part correct, it does not follow, that they are wholly ſo, or, that the concluſive objection drawn from them, is well founded.

It

It would be eaſy to obviate it, more particularly and extenſively, by a view of the origin and hiſtory of Cathedral, Collegiate, and Parochial Churches, Religious Houſes, and, thoſe inſtruments of Norman oppreſſion, Appropriations. All which would prove, that the cuſtom of providing for the poor, out of the property of the Church, gradually declined from a variety of cauſes, though chiefly from the ſhameful plunder of the Parochial Revenues, and the conſequent poverty of the Parochial Clergy,---that, in the courſe of many centuries, it imperceptibly and almoſt wholly wore away, ſo that, long before the Reformation, many proviſions had been made by the ſtatute law of this kingdom for the regulation and relief of the poor,---and that, on the ſuppreſſion of the monaſteries, when the ſcanty remnant of ancient monaſtic charity and hoſpitality was finally annihilated, it was found indiſpenſibly requiſite, (after various ineffectual methods had

had been attempted for upwards of ſixty years,) to paſs an act, in the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign, obliging every pariſh to maintain its own poor. And, thus, whatever might have been the ancient cuſtom, or in whatever manner it might have formerly affected the intereſts and poſſeſſions of the Clergy, yet it was then compleatly done away, by an act of the State.

To queſtion, then, the right of the exiſting Clergy to their Revenues,---to raiſe doubts, whether their revenues have been aſſigned to them, as a real or an uſufructuary property,---and to ſuggeſt, that the excluſive enjoyment of them by the Clergy is a very doubtful point of equity, can tend to no good, in the preſent ſtate of things. For, though it be allowed, that tithes were originally voluntary, they have been rendered obligatory in this kingdom near a thouſand years ago; and, though

though it be granted, that formerly a part of them was applied to other pious uſes, as well as to the maintenance of the Clergy, they have, nevertheleſs, deſcended to the Clergy now in being, and, (with great reaſon after ſuffering ſo conſiderable a diminution of them,) been aſſigned to the Clergy as *their ſole property*, under the moſt clear and undeniable ſanctions of the Legiſlature of this kingdom.

The objection is, therefore, groundleſs; and it not only betrays an unpardonable ignorance of the poſitive laws of this kingdom, and of the deciſions of our courts of equity in ſupport of the Clerical title to tithes, but it is alſo wholly inapplicable to the Clergy of the preſent day, or their predeceſſors for the laſt two hundred years,---the State or Community, by the act of the forty-third of Elizabeth, having obliged all perſons indiſcriminately, whether of the Clergy or Laity, to contribute

to

to the maintenance of the poor, in fair and equitable proportion, according to their property.

THUS have I endeavoured, with tolerable preciſion, to aſcertain the Revenues of the Eſtabliſhed Clergy in this Kingdom. And, from what hath been ſaid, it appears, that the Abolition of the Dignified Clergy, and the application of their Revenues to other religious and pious purpoſes, or to the benefit of the State, would not compenſate for the bad effects, intimately connected with ſuch a meaſure,---that the Equalization alſo of the Incomes of the Parochial Clergy would not be accompanied by proportionable advantages, but would be eventually productive of the moſt injurious conſequences to the religious and political intereſts of the nation,---that the ſituation and circumſtances of the Clergy, and of the

Eſtabliſhed Churches, in other Kingdoms, cannot be admitted in England, from local and particular conſiderations,---that the Eccleſiaſtical Revenues are neither miſapplied, nor, in proportion to the number of the Clergy, unneceſſary or enormous:---and, therefore, "Though theſe "Revenues may, collectively, appear large, "they afford a very moderate Compe-"tency to the many Thouſands, whoſe "Subſiſtence depends upon them."

AN

ESSAY

ON

THE REVENUES

OF

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THE right of the Clergy of the Church of England to the Revenues with which they are endowed, and the amount of thoſe Revenues, have been inveſtigated in the two preceding Chapters; in which have been ſhewn, that the right of the Clergy is founded in natural reaſon, Divine precedent, and poſitive law, and that the preſent income, derived from that

right, is ſo far from being enormous, that it is, upon the whole, inadequate to the neceſſary and becoming ſupport of the different branches of our Religious Eſtabliſhment.

It remains, then, to ſhew, further, that "Theſe Revenues, particularly the part "of them ariſing from Tithes, are nei-"ther burthenſome to the Individual, nor "injurious to the Public:"---againſt which, it hath been much the faſhion of late, to throw out the moſt groundleſs and illiberal objections;---every ſhaft, which ingenuity, wit, or malice could deviſe, hath been levelled againſt them: inſomuch, that there is hardly an imaginary or real grievance, with which this kingdom is ſo pathetically ſaid to be oppreſſed, which hath not been attributed to the payment of tithes.

To enumerate all ſuch pretended grievances here, would be uſeleſs, as one only

of

of all the heavy catalogue, ſeems to have any connexion with the preſent ſubject; and, that is, the high price of corn:--- This hath been pointedly aſſerted to proceed from the taking of tithes, whether in kind or by compoſition; as it creates an obſtruction to the regular and ample ſupply of the neceſſary articles of life. But, before we admit this to be the effect, let us ſearch more accurately into the cauſe aſſigned, and aſcertain, how far a correſpondence can, and actually does, ſubſiſt between them. Let us enquire, how far the payment of tithes affects the intereſts of the Land-occupiers; and, if it ſhall appear, that they are not burthened in their individual capacity, it will follow, that the nation cannot be injured in her political: and, that, therefore, the high price of corn is not to be aſcribed to the practice of paying tithes

in kind, or of compounding for them in money.

To ſhew, that the Land-occupiers are not individually burthened, let us ſtate,---the Annual Amount of the Landed Rental, and of the groſs Produce of the Kingdom, ariſing from Land and Animals,---the Proportion of this Rental, or this Produce, ſubject to the payment of Tithes,---and the Value, in kind or money, actually received by the Clergy and Impropriators, on account of the Tithes of that Produce.

THE annual amount of the rents or value of all Lands, in England and Wales, is moſt commonly allowed, from a computation formed on the baſis of the land-tax, to be about 20,000,000l.: however, it probably riſes to a much larger ſum.

A cal-

A calculation, built on the compariſon of the number of years purchaſe at which land went about an hundred years ago, with the number of years purchaſe now given for land, will raiſe it very conſiderably. About the time of the Revolution, land ſold at eighteen years purchaſe, when the rental of the kingdom was 13,000,000l. per annum;---at preſent, or, at leaſt, within a ſhort period, land hath ſold at thirty years purchaſe and upwards: ---And, therefore, if the ſame proportion between the number of years purchaſe, and the whole rental, ſtill exiſts, the value of the landed property of the kingdom is not much ſhort of 22,000,000l. per annum.

But, if a reliance may be placed on the information, or a judgment formed on the opinion, of the author of *The Wealth of Nations*, the amount of the rents or value of all lands in the kingdom, exceeds

even 22,000,000l. per annum. He ſays, that "The rent of land, that portion of "the produce which belongs to the pro- "prietors, is ſcarcely any where in Great "Britain ſuppoſed to be more than a third "part of the whole produce." Now, as will be immediately ſhewn, the whole annual groſs products derived from the lands in England and Wales, are worth, on the average, full 72,000,000l.: the rental, therefore, of the kingdom in land, ought to be equal to 24,000,000l. per annum.

And, that it moſt probably does amount to 24,000,000l. a year, may be collected from the information of *Arthur Young*. He ſtates, according to *Chalmers's Comparative Eſtimate*, (as quoted by *Brand*, in an eſſay on *The Alteration of the Land-tax*, &c.) the quantity of land in cultivation at 32,000,000 of acres, which, at 15s. per acre, will give 24,000,000l. of rent per annum:

annum: and 15s. per acre cannot, on the average, be eſteemed an over-valuation of land in a ſtate of culture; as, in fact, except in a very ſmall part of the kingdom, cultivated land ſcarcely ſets at ſo low a price.

To ſupport the probability of the landed rental of the kingdom, riſing to 24,000,000l. per annum, (at which it was, indeed, computed in ſeveral periodical publications, about the year 1788,) and to ſatisfy the doubts of thoſe who may be inclined to queſtion the poſſibility of it, the groſs landed and animal produce of the kingdom is now brought forward, with a valuation of it, in the following ſtatement; which hath been collected from various ſources of public information, and from the communications of ſeveral intelligent and competent perſons---

A COMPU-

A COMPUTATION

OF THE

VALUE OF THE AVERAGE ANNUAL GROSS PRODUCE

OF THE KINGDOM,

ARISING FROM LAND AND ANIMALS:

Ten Millions of Acres of Wheat, Rye, Barley, Oats, Peaſe, Beans, &c. at 4l. per Acre	£40,000,000
Four Millions of Acres of Hay, Clover, Artificial Graſſes, Vetches, &c. at 50s. per Acre	10,000,000
Eight Thouſand Tons of Hops, calculated from the Duty for Seven Years, at 50l. per Ton uncured ...	400,000
One Million of Beeves, one with the other fattening Twenty Weeks, on Graſs, Turnips, &c. at 1s. 6d. per Week	1,500,000
Six Millions of Sheep, one with the other fattening Thirteen Weeks, on Graſs, Turnips, &c. at 6d. per Week	1,950,000
Two Millions of Milch Cows, the Milk of each for Forty Weeks being worth 2s. 6d. per Week	8,050,000
Wool, in the neareſt whole Numbers	3,200,000
Ten Millions of Lambs, at 5s. } each, when able to {	2,500,000
Two Millions of Calves, at 20s. } live without the {	2,000,000
Four Millions of Pigs, at 5s. } Dam ..... {	1,000,000
	£70,600,000

To which, add, vegetables and fruits of all kinds, for the annual conſumption of 8,000,000 of people; whoſe value, in the courſe

courſe of the year, will amount to above 4,500,000l. at only a farthing and half per day for each perſon, according to the allowance of the authors of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, under the article *London*: and, when there is likewiſe added the value of all other landed and animal produce not before included, ſuch as, colts, ---poultry, and eggs,---wood,---flax,---hemp,---clover, turnip, cole and rape ſeeds,---madder, and other dyers' weeds, ---drugs, &c. &c.---and the graſs and vegetables conſumed by horſes, young and working cattle, pigs, &c. &c.---it does not appear merely poſſible, but moſt probable, that the annual amount of the landed and animal produce of this kingdom, is certainly equal to 72,000,000l.; and that, conſequently, according to the authority before quoted, the amount of its landed rental is fully equal to 24,000,000l. per annum*.

HAVING,

* In the preceding computation of the annual value of the landed

HAVING, thus, ſtated the annual amount of the landed rental, and of the groſs produce of the kingdom ariſing from land and animals, let us proceed to enquire into, "The Proportion of this Rental or this "Produce, ſubject to the payment of "Tithes."

The exempt, or tithe-free lands, that is, the lands which were formerly in the poſſeſſion of the Greater Abbies, have been variouſly computed, though generally preſumed to be worth in value, at this time, about 3,000,000l. per annum:---a computation, it may be ſuggeſted, far exceeding their real value. And, indeed, in all Engliſh Eccleſiaſtical antiquity, there is ſcarcely a point, upon which a greater variety of opinions hath been given, than

landed and animal produce of this kingdom, each particular article in it ſpeaks for itſelf. And, if ſome of them ſhould be thought to be eſtimated at too high a price, others muſt be allowed to be reckoned at a price equally low; and, to a variety of articles, no value whatever is affixed: therefore, the probability is, that their collective valuation is not exaggerated, when ſtated at 72,000,000l per annum.

upon

upon the true incomes of the Regular Clergy, at the æra of the Reformation.

Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, is allowed to have taken the greateſt pains in aſcertaining the annual revenue of all the ſuppreſſed Foundations; and he makes the total amount of that which belonged to the Smaller and Greater Abbies, &c. &c. diſſolved by the acts of the 27th and 31ſt of Henry the Eighth, not to exceed 161,000l. per annum. And, upon a preſumption, that other lands have increaſed in value in the proportion, whether of ten, twelve, or even fourteen to one ſince that period, it will ſhew, that the preſent value of all ſuch Abbey lands, ought to be computed only in the ſame ratio, and to be ſtated, as now amounting to either 1,610,000l. 1,932,000l. or 2,254,000l. per annum.

It hath been contended, that, though Lord Herbert's account might have been true,

true, in reſpect to the income actually received by the Religious Foundations, he is very erroneous, in ſtating it to be the real annual value of the lands, from which that income aroſe; as the Monks, &c. on foreſeeing the ſtorm which was coming upon them, leaſed out their moſt valuable eſtates and poſſeſſions, at enormous fines and very low reſerved rents: ſo that Houſes, whoſe yearly incomes are ſcarcely valued at 200l. per annum, were really worth as many thouſands.

This notion hath had many favourers, and authorities are quoted in the ſupport of it. For inſtance,---that, in *Acta Regia*, it is ſaid, "The revenues of the Monaſte-" ries ſuppreſſed amounted to 161,000l. " ſterling, as they were then letten, the " Priors of moſt of them having ſunk a " great part thereof into their own " pockets:"---that, in *The Hiſtory of the Reformation*, *Burnet* ſays, "The clear value

" of

" of all the ſuppreſſed Houſes is caſt up in " an account then ſtated to be 131,000l. " as the rents were then related; but was " at leaſt ten times ſo much in true va- " lue:" --- and that, in *The Bibliotheca Hiſtorico-Sacra*, under the word *Abbey*, *Broughton* ſays, " There were 190 ſuch " Religious Houſes diſſolved in England, " whoſe yearly revenues amounted to " 2,853,000l."

But, all theſe aſſertions are juſtly to be queſtioned. In *Acta Regia*, and, *The Hiſtory of the Reformation*, no reaſons are aſſigned in illuſtration or proof of the inſinuation and opinion therein advanced; they reſt only on mere ſuppoſition. And, though *Burnet*'s notion is itſelf ſufficiently extravagant and improbable, it is not half ſo extravagant and impoſſible, as the poſitive declaration of *Broughton*; which is ſo far from being ſupported by any ſemblance of truth or probability, that it oppoſes the general

general tenor of our national hiſtory,---tending to prove, that, of the 4,000,000l. per annum, at which the landed rental of the kingdom had been valued about that period, the Monaſtic orders alone were in poſſeſſion of almoſt three fourths.

The meaning of the expreſſions, in *Acta Regia*, and, *The Hiſtory of the Reformation*, if they have any meaning, muſt be, either, that the Commiſſioners, appointed for the general ſurvey of the poſſeſſions of the Religious Foundations, did not diſcharge their duty, but were favourable to the Monks, (notwithſtanding it is certain, that the Regular Clergy were at the time moſt generally diſliked, or ill-ſpoken of,) and rated their incomes at a tenth part only of their real produce; or, that the fines and rents, at which the lands belonging to the Religious Houſes were leaſed out and ſet, bore no proportion to the true value of them.

" But

" But the eſtimate of the poſſeſſions of " the Religious Houſes, will not be much " increaſed, by the ſuppoſition of their " lands being let under their real value: " for, if they were held by leaſe, and for " long terms, their annual income could " not receive any great addition from " fines paid on renewals, nor the value " of their eſtates be much greater, from " their reverſionary rights, on the expi- " ration of their leaſes. There were then " no reſtraining ſtatutes; ſo that their " leaſes were probably for a longer term, " than corporate bodies are now permit- " ted to grant, and the intereſt of money " being alſo double what it is at preſent, " theſe two circumſtances muſt have con- " ſiderably reduced the profits they could " expect from fines on renewals. Nor, is " it poſſible, their reſerved rents ſhould " bear ſo ſmall a proportion to the real " value of the land: no proof is brought

" of the aſſertion, nor hath it even been " ſhewn, that the ruinous method inva- " riably purſued for the two laſt centu- " ries by eccleſiaſtics, of fines on renew- " als, was then eſtabliſhed. To theſe " conſiderations may be added, that no " inconſiderable part of their lands was " under their own culture, and, there- " fore, their real value could not be af- " fected by the preceding cauſes." (See, *Naſmith's Preface to Notitia Monaſtica.)*

To all thoſe, who are inclined to believe, that the revenues of the Religious Houſes were ſo greatly under-rated, as *Burnet* declares, it is recommended carefully to peruſe the King's Writ, and the Inſtructions, iſſued for the purpoſe of the valuation, with the Preface to the Return, made by the Commiſſioners acting under them. (See, *Liber Regis*, by *Bacon.)* And, then, let them judge, whether any of the Commiſſioners would have been guilty of

ſuch

ſuch temerity, as to be negligent in the diſcharge of the truſt repoſed in them, when ſubject to the vigilance, controul and ſuperintendence of ſuch a Miniſter, as Vicar-General Cromwell, and, more eſpecially, when employed in executing the commands of ſo ſuſpicious and imperious a maſter, as Henry the Eighth.

The inſtructions, and the authority conveyed by them, afforded the Commiſſioners every power and opportunity of inveſtigation; and they do not appear to have been juſtly chargeable, with having neglected any ſources of information. We may, therefore, reaſonably conclude, that, where any fraudulent leaſes had been made, (as they muſt have been at that time of modern date,) that the Commiſſioners accurately enquired into the real value of the property ſo leaſed, and rated it accordingly in their valuations; which were to be extended to all the poſſeſſions of the

ſeveral Religious Foundations. And, it is particularly enjoined, that, in making the valuations, "The whole and entire "value of each be made by themſelves, "and that no deductions be allowed for "reparations, fees, ſerving of cures, and "other cauſes, except annual rents, pen-"ſions, alms, ſynods, proxies, and fees "of office:"---and, as this was to be done "at the utmoſt peril" of the Commiſ-ſioners, ſo it may be brought in preſump-tive proof of their exactneſs, that the valuations, in general, are made even to the fractional proportion of a penny.

Hume, indeed, whoſe induſtry and ac-curacy as an hiſtorian have been warmly and deſervedly celebrated, gives not the leaſt credit to the notion of an under-va-luation of the property of the Religious Foundations. He ſays, that "The whole "revenue of the ſuppreſſed Eſtabliſh-"ments amounted to 161,000l.:"---And, then,

then, remarks, "It is worthy of obſerva-
"tion, that all the lands and poſſeſſions
"and revenue of England had, a little
"before this period, (1538,) been rated at
"4,000,000l. per annum; ſo that the
"revenues of the Monks, even compre-
"hending the Leſſer Monaſteries, did not
"exceed a twentieth part of the national
"income: a ſum vaſtly inferior, to what
"is commonly apprehended."

It is granted, however, that, as in almoſt all public taxations, it is utterly impoſſible to aſſeſs or rate every property according to its true value, but, that more or leſs difference will be made, from various incidental circumſtances, ſo, in reſpect to the revenues of the Religious Foundations, the valuations of them by the Commiſſioners were, for the moſt part, accurate, though ſometimes not ſo; but, even when inaccurate, by no means, ſurely, in the proportion of nine parts in ten.

This clearly appears, from the re-ſurveys which were taken of the poſſeſſions of ſeveral Houſes, after they became the property of the Crown: ſome of theſe were found to be exactly valued, and others to be eſtimated at four fifths, three fourths, two thirds, and, (in a few inſtances,) at only one half, of their real value. And, though it be ſcarcely poſſible, at the diſtance of two centuries and an half, to diſcover for a certainty how this came to paſs, it ſerves, however, to ſhew, that, notwithſtanding the Monaſtics might have been favoured in the eſtimation of their revenues, it was, in general, in a very moderate degree, in compariſon of *Burnet's* aſſertion.

Stating, then, the revenues of all the ſuppreſſed Religious Foundations to be under-rated, on the average, at a third part, *Lord Herbert's* ſum of their collective amount at 161,000l. will be increaſed to 214,000l.

214,000l. per annum: which, when compared with the landed rental of the kingdom at that period, will nearly confirm *Hume*'s opinion, that "The whole revenue of the ſuppreſſed Eſtabliſhments "did not exceed a twentieth part of the "national landed income."

But, whatever may have been the yearly amount of the revenue of all the ſuppreſſed Religious Foundations, at the Reformation or any ſubſequent æra, the enquiry, at preſent, relates to that part only of it, which was appropriated to or poſſeſſed by the *Greater Abbies*; --- whoſe poſſeſſions alone were granted to the King, in as "full and ample manner, as they were "holden by the late proprietors;"---and of whoſe lands, it muſt be remembered, that not *all* of them became diſcharged from tithes, but only ſuch lands, and from ſuch tithes, as they were already diſcharged, at or before the diſſolution by

the act of the 31ſt of Henry the Eighth. (See, *Burn's Eccleſiaſtical Law*, under the article, *Tithes.*)

The Greater Abbies, according to the moſt correct and authentic liſt hitherto made public, and to be found in the new edition of *Tanner's Notitia Monaſtica*, were in number one hundred and eighty-ſeven, and were in poſſeſſion of a revenue, as valued by the Commiſſioners, amounting to 108,000l. per annum; and to which, if we add one third part of the ſame ſum, according to the reſult of the preceding diſcuſſion, their annual income muſt have ariſen to 144,000l. Without having recourſe to the original ſurvey, it is impoſſible to aſcertain, preciſely, the proportion of this income, depending on appropriate tithes and parſonages. But, this, moſt undoubtedly, may be advanced as true, that, of 3,840 impropriations and appropriations which are now ſuppoſed to exiſt,

the

the Monaſtic Bodies were in poſſeſſion of two thirds, or 2,560; and which, ſuppoſing each of them, on the average, to have been eight or nine pounds per annum, muſt have reduced the income of the Greater Abbies ariſing from their landed eſtates or farms, to about 120,000l. a year, at a very high computation:---ſuch, as poſſibly would not ſtand a cloſer or more particular examination, but is here, generally, admitted, towards the illuſtration and proof of the point in queſtion.

Now, whether the rents and profits of the landed eſtates, belonging to the Greater Abbies, and amounting at the diſſolution to 120,000l. per annum, be ſtated, as having increaſed ſince that time, like other Church property, (not, that any difference can really be imagined to have taken place, in reſpect to the increaſed value of the Abbey lands, and thoſe which never belonged to either the

Regular

Regular or Secular Clergy,) in the proportion of ten, twelve, or even fourteen to one, the Abbey lands cannot have increaſed in value, in a greater degree, or to a greater amount, than 1,200,000l. 1,440,000l. or 1,680,000l. per annum :--- that is, even at the higheſt computation of their real value, at the ſuppreſſion, and at this time, the Abbey lands cannot now be annually worth more than a little above one half of the ſum, they are uſually preſumed to produce, namely, 1,680,000l. inſtead of 3,000,000l. per annum.

The preſent groſs value, then, of the exempt or tithe-free lands, on account of having been part of the poſſeſſions of the Greater Abbies, might be fairly eſtimated, in the neareſt whole numbers, at 1,700,000l. a year; but, to give every reaſonable allowance, it ſhall be taken at 2,000,000l. per annum. And, thus, the proportion of the landed rental of the king-

kingdom, out of which no tithes are paid, in conſequence of their ariſing from the totally or partially diſcharged Abbey lands, is a tenth, or a twelfth part of the whole national rental, juſt as it is computed at 20,000,000l. or 24,000,000l. per annum.

But, the Abbey lands are not the only lands exempt from tithes. There are others, to a very conſiderable amount, which are virtually freed or diſcharged, by the payment of moduſes and ancient compoſitions, by claims of preſcription, by act of Parliament under bills of incloſure, &c. &c. Theſe virtual exemptions extend, ſometimes to all the produce of the eſtates claiming them, and ſometimes to a part only, or to particular articles of growth and increaſe. However, in general, they relate to ſmall tithes; and the ſums of money, paid to the Parochial Clergy on account of them, are uſually very inconſiderable. Where they extend,

extend, generally, throughout pariſhes, and to many articles of increaſe, the incumbents of ſuch pariſhes are greatly impoveriſhed, and, in proceſs of time, muſt be reduced to the neceſſity of placing their chief dependence, on the inſufficient emoluments, derived from their glebes and ſurplice fees; and, more eſpecially, ſince it commonly happens, that theſe exemptions prevail moſt in thoſe pariſhes, whoſe great tithes and moſt valuable glebes are impropriate.

It does not immediately appear an eaſy taſk, to aſcertain the quantity of rent, land or produce virtually diſcharged from tithes, in conſequence of the ſmall eſtabliſhed payments in lieu of them, and of the other inferior claims of partial exemption: all which are common in ſome hundreds and counties, and ſcarcely known in others. The number, however, of pariſhes throughout the kingdom, will furniſh

niſh a baſis for ſome eſtimation of the quantity. And, taking the whole number of pariſhes at 10,000, and allowing ſuch a proportion of the produce of each, (as would afford to the land-owners rents equal to 200l. a year,) to be covered by any of the foregoing claims, payments, &c. &c. the reſult will be, that the quantity of land or rent virtually diſcharged from tithes, by moduſes, ancient payments, preſcriptions, compoſitions by act of Parliament, &c. &c. is equal to 2,000,000l. per annum.

The accuracy of this computation is not pertinaciouſly inſiſted on. Though it is believed to far exceed the true proportion, it is, nevertheleſs, here allowed, to ſhew, that the total quantity of land or rent, throughout England and Wales, either abſolutely or virtually diſcharged from tithes, by means of having been a part of the poſſeſſions of the Greater Abbies, or of paying only ſmall ſums of money,

money, &c. in lieu of them, may amount to about 4,000,000l. per annum. And that, therefore, the proportion of the landed rental of the kingdom ſubject to the payment of tithes, is, either four fifths, or 16,000,000l. or five ſixths, or 20,000,000l. according as the collective landed rental is taken at 20,000,000l. or 24,000,000l. per annum.

FROM having conſidered, the annual amount of the landed rental, and of the groſs produce of the kingdom, ariſing from land and animals,---and the proportion of that rental, or that produce, ſubject to the payment of tithes,---let us turn our attention, to "The Value, in kind or money, actually received by the Clergy "and Impropriators, on account of the "Tithes of that produce."

The titheable produce of the kingdom conſiſts of wheat, barley, rye, oats, peaſe, beans,

beans, vetches, hay, clover, artificial graſſes, hops, fruits, turnips, potatoes, garden vegetables, flax, hemp, ſeeds, dyers' plants, calves, lambs, colts, pigs, eggs, wool, milk, wood, agiſtments, &c. &c. The tithe, or tenth part, of all theſe various articles of increaſe, was originally veſted, by the poſitive law of the land, in the Clergy alone, and, were there extant no impropriations, claims of exemption, moduſes, preſcriptions, &c. would be ſtill due unto, and recoverable by, them. And, accordingly, as this groſs produce was eſtimated at 60,000,000l. or 72,000,000l. (that is, on the authority before mentioned, at three times the amount of the national rental, whether that rental be taken at 20,000,000l. or, agreeably to the ſtatement of the produce already given in this Chapter, at 24,000,000l.) the Parochial Clergy alone would have an equitable and legal right to an annual revenue of 6,000,000l. or 7,000,000l.

7,000,000l. exclusive of their glebes and other emoluments.

But, however, of such a considerable revenue, though primarily designed for the Clergy only, a very moderate proportion is received at present, either by them, or by the possessors of the lay-impropriations. The revenue which ought to arise from tithes, is so diminished by the several methods of absolute and virtual discharge above recited, that the right itself to tithes does not extend to above five sixths or four fifths of the rental or produce of the kingdom; and, according, as that rental is taken at 20,000,000l. or 24,000,000l. the part of the produce, subject to tithes, cannot be valued at above 48,000,000l. or 60,000,000l. per annum: the medium of which valuations would give to the Clergy and Lay-impropriators, (as will appear hereafter,) an income above three times as large, as that which they

they now enjoy, provided the juſt tenth was paid unto them, or a compoſition equal to its value.

This circumſtance affords a ſtrong preſumption in favour of the moderation of the Clergy and Lay-impropriators, in reſpect to the compoſitions demanded by them in lieu of their tithes: --- which will be more clearly ſeen, by going into a particular detail of the revenues of each, and by aſcertaining the ſums actually received by them, on account of tithes.

The annual incomes, of the Epiſcopal Bench, have been ſtated, at 72,000l.--- of the Dignified Clergy, at 140,000l.--- and, of the Parochial Clergy, after a medium of three calculations, at 1,350,000l. The exiſting impropriations are uſually eſtimated, (though certainly without ſufficient accuracy,) at 3,840 in number; of which about one third, according to the *Liber Regis*, are in the poſſeſſion of the

Epiſcopal and Dignified Clergy, and, in whoſe reſpective incomes, the value of them is included; the other two thirds are in the poſſeſſion of the Lay-impropriators, and, according to a computation in the eighteenth volume of *The Annals of Agriculture*, (which, however, does not ſpecify the proportions of it, ariſing from tithes and from glebe lands,) are worth 75l. each, on the average, and, collectively, 192,000l. per annum. This ſhort ſtatement exhibits, in one view, the total amount of all church, glebe, and augmentation lands, ſurplice fees, and of all tithes, in the poſſeſſion of the Clergy or Laity, either paid in kind or accounted for by compoſition: all together making 1,754,000l. a year, or between an eleventh and twelfth part of the national landed rental at its loweſt computation of 20,000,000l. per annum; and moſt directly manifeſting, on what grounds are

founded

founded the clamours, raiſed againſt the payment of tithes!

Of this ſum of 1,754,000l. a very conſiderable, that is, between a fourth and a fifth, part, ariſes from the rents of landed property belonging to the Church, and from other emoluments. The Epiſcopal and Dignified Clergy enjoy a collective income of 212,000l. per annum; of which, about 116,000l. are derived from their eſtates in land, and from other ſmaller ſources of revenue; and the remaining 96,000l. from the impropriations ſtill continuing in their poſſeſſion. Of the income of the Parochial Clergy, alſo, ſtated at 1,350,000l. it muſt be remembered, that it ariſes, as well from glebe and augmentation lands, with ſurplice fees, as from tithes in kind or by compoſition. The augmentation lands have been ſhewn to be 50,000l. per annum; and the glebe lands and ſurplice fees of each pariſh, can

ſcarcely be valued, on the average, under 20l. a year: which, according to the number of 10,000 pariſhes in the kingdom, and in conjunction with the value of the augmentation lands, will amount to 250,000l. per annum. And, when this ſum of 250,000l. with the preceding one of 116,000l. is deducted from 1,754,000l. there will remain only 1,388,000l. as ariſing from tithes; and which would demonſtrate, on no unfair grounds, that, ſtating the proportion of the landed rental ſubject to tithes at 16,000,000l. the deductions out of it, on account of tithes, do not amount, on the average, to 1s. 9d. in the pound.

But, to meet this part of the point at iſſue, in the moſt open manner, and to make every reaſonable allowance which can be required, the annual amount of the revenue, received on account of tithes, ſhall be enlarged. The value of the impropriations, in tithes only, whether in the

the poſſeſſion of the Clergy or Laity, ſhall be taken at 100l. each,* on the average, and, collectively, at 384,000l.; and the income of the Parochial Clergy, after the higheſt calculation given of it, at 1,593,000l. from which, however, muſt be deducted, as before, for the united value of the glebe and augmentation lands, and ſurplice fees, 250,000l. And, thus,

* The valuation of the impropriations, in tithes only, at 100l. a year each on the average, is, I am perſuaded, a very liberal one. The deductions, which muſt be allowed out of their value, on account of the glebe lands uſually annexed to impropriations in general,---The great number of Vicarages, which are ſituated in large towns and cities, and whoſe impropriations can be ſcarcely of much, if of any value whatever,---The number of impropriations, which are either partially or wholly reſtored to their reſpective Vicarages, and in whoſe valuations, the value of ſuch reſtored impropriations are neceſſarily included,---The number of impropriations, which have been bought by the landed proprietors of pariſhes, and have been divided, in due proportion, to the freeholds of the ſeveral eſtates,---and, The number of impropriations, which, in pariſhes where incloſures have taken place, have been commuted by allotments of land:---From one or other of theſe cauſes, the impropriations, in all apparent probability, have been virtually reduced to two thirds of the number of them, commonly ſuppoſed to be now exiſting, or to 2,560; which, at 150l. per annum each, (and which is, ſurely, a greatly exaggerated valuation,) will amount to 384,000l. a year.

will the foregoing ſum of 1,388,000l. ariſing annually from tithes, be increaſed to 1,727,000l.; and which, when proportioned to the rental of the lands ſtill wholly or partially ſubject to tithes, will, it is preſumed, ſatisfy every candid enquirer, that, even at the utmoſt computation to which the payment of tithes, in kind or by compoſition, can be extended, it does not amount, on the average, at a titheable rental of 16,000,000l. to 2s. 2d. in the pound.

It is obvious to remark here, that, notwithſtanding the moſt poſitive aſſertions to the contrary, tithes are, on the average, compounded or accounted for, at a very moderate rate, not greatly exceeding a tenth part of the titheable rental of 16,000,000l. inſtead of the tenth part of the titheable groſs produce of 48,000,000l. ---the Clergy and Impropriators together, (valuing their united receipts at the higheſt,

higheſt, and the titheable rental at the loweſt calculation,) receiving only 1,727,000l. per annum, or a little more than a third part of their legal right.

This ſtatement acquires conſiderable ſupport and credibility, from its near coincidence with the proportion which the compoſition for tithe bears to rent, in various parts of the Arch-Deaconry of *Salop*, as remarked by *Arch-Deacon Plymley* in his before-cited charge, and as applied by him to the kingdom at large. Speaking of the general compoſition in thoſe pariſhes of the Deaneries which he had viſited, he ſays, that, though "He may "not have documents ſufficiently accu- "rate to give a decided opinion, yet he "hath reaſon to think, that, if the whole "land of each paid tithe, according to the "compoſition now actually in force, it "would not amount to more than a tenth "part of the rent, or thereabouts: and

" with reference to this, if we again re-
" member, that the Rectories of this
" Arch-Deaconry are above double the
" number of Vicarages, and almoſt dou-
" ble the other Churches; and that the
" Rectories throughout England exceed
" the Vicarages by better than one fifth
" only, and the Chapels, &c. by better
" than two fifths only; we have the com-
" fortable preſumption in our favour, that
" the average burthen of the Eſtabliſh-
" ment, ſhould it ever unfortunately be
" looked upon as a burthen, is ſtill leſs
" than what is now ſtated."

It is a ſingular circumſtance, that, in writing on the ſubject of tithes, in reſpect to the very county in which ſeveral Tithe Meetings have been holden, for the purpoſe of obtaining a commutation of tithes, there the author of the *Agricultural View of Devon and Cornwall,* tranſmitted to the Board of Agriculture, ſays, " As to tithes,

" the

" the whole of that ſubject is of great
" importance, but would require much
" more attention, than I could poſſibly
" give it, in order to enable me to form
" any decided judgement on the ſubject.
" I can only ſay, in juſtice to the very
" reſpectable body of the Clergy in
" the two counties which I had the
" honour to ſurvey, that they are, in ge-
" neral, contented with very moderate
" compoſitions for their tithes; and that,
" I am perſuaded, were an account taken
" of the whole dioceſe, it would be found,
" that the number of pariſhes where there
" were any litigations or diſputes reſpect-
" ing their tithes, are very few, indeed,
" in compariſon to thoſe where the peo-
" ple live in harmony with their paſtors."

What opinion ſhall we form, then, of the wiſdom, juſtice or expediency of the meaſure, propoſed by the holders and abettors of the Devonſhire Tithe Meetings?

ings? On what ground of peculiar and local hardſhip and oppreſſion, do they ſupport their pretenſions to countenance, from the kingdom at large? Or, on what rational expectation can they preſume to flatter themſelves, that the Legiſlature will attend to ſolicitations, unconfirmed by facts on the ſpot, whence thoſe ſolicitations ariſe?

What ſhall we ſay, likewiſe, of the aſſertions of others, in a different part of the kingdom, who have ſo boldly pronounced the general deductions on account of tithes, to be equal to four ſhillings in the pound, and the total returns from tithes throughout the kingdom, to amount to 5,000,000l. per annum? And, what can we think of thoſe, who ſtate, more particularly, to the public, that, in *moſt* inſtances, the claim of tithes, and the exaction of the land-tax, amount to fourteen ſhillings in the pound; and that the

remain-

remaining ſix ſhillings will not always ſatisfy the poor-rates?

It is clear to demonſtration, that were the whole amount of the land-tax at 2,000,000l. levied upon the landed intereſt as it is called, inſtead of being conſiderably relieved by the proportion of it aſſeſſed on penſions, ſalaries, tithes and rents of houſes,---and were the whole poor-rates, which, from the laſt returns, on the average of three years, appear to be 2,200,000l. charged alſo on the landed intereſt, inſtead of being materially leſſened by the proportion of them raiſed upon houſes, tithes, &c.---and were the whole amount of the annual receipts from tithes at 1,727,000l. added to the account, theſe ſeveral ſums will not exceed 5,927,000l. and that, if, as hath been ſuppoſed, a nominal land-tax of four ſhillings in the pound does not, by means of the proportion of it aſſeſſed on penſions, &c. extend

extend in reality to more than one ſhilling in the pound, on the average of the true value or rent of all lands in the kingdom, (that is, ſetting the inconſiderable part of the land-tax raiſed on the remoter counties, againſt the larger proportion charged upon the more central diſtricts,) the ſeveral ſums charged upon the landed intereſt, for land-tax, poor-rates and tithes, will not exceed 4,927,000l. per annum.

Stating, then, the landed rental, in relation to land-tax and poor-rates, at 20,000,000l. and, in relation to tithes, at 16,000,000l. per annum, it is evident, that, at 5,927,000l. for land-tax, poor-rates and tithes, the general average of the kingdom does not amount, for the two firſt, to 4s. 2½d. in the pound, and, for the laſt, to 2s. 2d. in the pound, or, added together, 6s. 4d. inſtead of 20s. in the pound: and that, if a nominal four ſhilling land-tax be, in fact, equivalent only to one, inſtead of two

ſhillings

ſhillings in the pound, on the average of the true value or rent of all lands in the kingdom, the deductions from the landed rental, on account of land-tax, poor-rates and tithes (where the latter are paid,) will be reduced to even 5s. 4d. in the pound:---that is, a trifle more than a fourth part of the ſum, with which the landed intereſt hath been ſo pertinaciouſly aſſerted to be charged, in *moſt* inſtances.

HAVING brought to a concluſion, the enquiry into the annual amount of the Landed Rental, and of the groſs Produce of the Kingdom, ariſing from Land and Animals, and ſhewn the proportionable part of that Rent or Produce, ſubject to the payment of Tithes, to be lightly aſſeſſed on that account, in compariſon of the real value of ſuch tithes, it may be aſked,---How does it appear, that the land occupiers

piers are burthened by the preſent ſyſtem of paying tithes, in kind or by compoſition? I ſay, the land occupiers, and not the land owners: ſince the latter, whether freeholders, copyholders or leaſeholders, occupying their own eſtates, bear a very ſmall proportion in point of number, to the abſolute rack renters, either for long or ſhort terms of years.

According to the author of *The Wealth of Nations*,---"There is no farmer, who "does not compute before hand what the "Church tithe is, one year with the "other, likely to amount to." He, undoubtedly, obſerves the ſame plan, in reſpect to all other outgoings, and gives a rent proportionable to the ſeveral deductions, of whoſe amount he is thus apprized. How, then, is he aggrieved, when the payment of any of theſe outgoings or charges are demanded of him? He hath equal reaſon to complain of paying his

his landlord the rent, for which he agreed with him. But, he is aware, that the farm belongs to his landlord, and that, in juſtice and honeſty, he ought not to make uſe of it for his own emolument, without paying a compenſation for it. And, he ought, alſo, to know, that the tithes of ſuch farm are no leſs the property of thoſe, to whom the law of the land hath given them; and, to ſecure the value of which to the rightful owner, his landlord permits him to occupy his farm at an inferior rent, to enable him to pay that tithe, or tenth part, as juſtly as he pays the other nine.

The following extract from an excellent little pamphlet, will more amply illuſtrate this part of the ſubject---"If an eſtate is "left or ſold ſubject to the payment of a "tenth of the produce to the Clergy or "to any other body, for any purpoſe that "ſhall be directed, that tenth part is as much

" much the property of that body, as the " other nine tenths are of the perſon who " inherits or buys the eſtate. Subject to " this payment, all the eſtates, now " chargeable with tithes, have deſcended " by inheritance, or come by purchaſe, " into the hands of the preſent poſſeſſors; " and it would be as unjuſt to take that " tenth from the Clergy, as to take away " the remainder from the perſons, who " are now in poſſeſſion of the eſtates. " They can have no right whatever to it. " They, or their anceſtors, bought their " eſtates with this condition or charge " entailed on them. In fact, they bought " but nine parts, and, to the other tenth, " have no more right, than to any other " eſtate in the neighbourhood.

" Beſides, ſuppoſe it were otherwiſe, " and the tenth, or tithe, were to be abo- " liſhed, it would not put a farthing into " the pocket of the farmer. It would be

" his

" his landlord, that would be the gainer,
" not he. The landlord would immedi-
" ately advance his rent, to the full
" amount of what was uſed to be paid in
" tithes, and would tell his tenant, that,
" as he now lets his eſtate tithe-free, or,
" in other words, lets him the *whole*
" eſtate, of which he had before let him
" only *nine tenths*, he expects an increaſe
" of rent, not only equal to what the
" Clergy claimed, but conſiderably more;
" for farmers need not be told, how much
" more eaſy the Clergy are in receiving
" their tithes, than thoſe Lay-Impropria-
" tors or Private Gentlemen, who have
" great tithes in their hands. Even, if
" tithes were taken away, and a compen-
" ſation made to the Clergy by a pariſh-
" rate, the farmers would be the loſers;
" for the landlords would advance their
" rents, in the manner and proportion
" aforeſaid, the pariſh-rates would be

"greatly increaſed, and that increaſe, "with the other parochial outgoings, "would be left to be paid, wholly, by the "tenants."

It hath been contended, that, when tithes were firſt ordained in England, the lands were almoſt in a ſtate of nature, and appropriated nearly to paſturage; and that, therefore, it was never the intention of the Legiſlature of that period, to inveſt the Clergy with a right to tithes, in a modern ſenſe, and to the extent, at which they are, at preſent, demanded and ſupported by law, the tenth of the increaſe, inſtead of the tenth of the profit.

In anſwer to this ſuggeſtion, may be urged the earlieſt charters of the Saxon Monarchs, in reſpect to tithes; in which the payment of them is commanded out of all the products, (and not of the nett profits,) of the ground, as well as of the cattle.

cattle. And, if it be allowed, that the revenues of our Kings in thoſe days could not be paid, through want of ſpecie, in any other way, than in a proportion of the abſolute produce of the ſoil, it conſequently muſt be admitted, that the Clergy could not have received their tithes by any other method, than in kind, and neceſſarily muſt have been paid the tenth part of the groſs produce. And, to prove, that England was, naturally, fertile in corn, and productive of it, in particular, at the very time in which the right of tithes was eſtabliſhed, and, of courſe, that the produce of tithes in this kingdom muſt have been, originally, very conſiderable, an extract ſhall be introduced, from *The Political Survey of Great Britain*, which affords ſuch poſitive evidence of the fertility of Britain and its abundant produce in corn, as will apologize for the length of the quotation, and, at the ſame time, ſufficiently obviate the objection.

According to *Campbel*---" We may with " probability admit, that Britain was very " early known to the Phœnicians, ſince, " in the firſt accounts we have from the " Greeks, who derived their knowledge " from them, it is celebrated for its ferti- " lity, a certain proof that it had been " long inhabited. Julius Cæſar allows, " that in the maritime provinces of this " our iſle, the people were well furniſhed " with corn; but at the ſame time aſſerts, " that, in the interior countries, they " lived chiefly on fleſh and milk. This " firſt he might undoubtedly know with " certainty; but the ſecond he could only " learn from report. Cornelius Tacitus, " a cautious and correct author, from the " information of his father-in-law, Julius " Agricola, than whom no man of his " time knew this country ſo well, or " could deſcribe it better, acknowledges " the mildneſs of the climate, and the

" richneſs

" richneſs of the ſoil, which, except the
" olive, the vine and other plants which
" he judged to be peculiar to warmer
" countries, produced every thing elſe
" in the greateſt plenty. He alſo obſer-
" ved, (and his whole relation ſhews him
" to have been diligent and exact in his
" enquiries, very ſenſible and impartial
" in his reports,) that, though the ſprings
" were forward, yet the grain ripened
" ſlowly. This he attributed to the fre-
" quent rains, and the humidity of the
" air and ſoil. We ſee no reaſon to doubt,
" either of the truth of the repreſentation,
" or of the juſtice of the remark. The
" Britons were but juſt beginning to learn
" the true principles of agriculture. Their
" own ſkill, ſuch as it was, enabled them
" to provide ſufficiently for their own
" ſubſiſtence, in the manner in which
" they lived, and hitherto they had look-
" ed no farther.

" By the Romans, who continued here " the greateſt part of five centuries, the " Britons were well inſtructed in all the " arts requiſite to civil life. They taught " them to conſtruct roads, to open canals, " to work mines, to improve their ports, " and, above all, to cultivate their coun- " try in the very beſt manner, by which " they rendered it a region of exquiſite " beauty and flowing abundance, while " themſelves were not only an elegant and " polite, but, at the ſame time, an active, " induſtrious and opulent people. Britain " was, in thoſe days, another Sicily to " the Roman empire; and, as the latter " ſupplied Italy, ſo the former furniſhed " the Roman armies in Germany and " Gaul, with corn and other proviſions. " It was this rendered our iſland of ſo " great conſequence to, and ſo much con- " ſidered by, theſe Sovereigns of the " world. It was this put it in the power of

" Carauſius,

" Carauſius, himſelf a Briton, to conſtrain " Maximinian and Diocleſian to allow his " aſſuming the Imperial title. It was " this, that induced the panegyriſts to " compliment Conſtantius Chlorus, and " his ſon Conſtantine the Great, in ſuch " ſwelling and pompous terms, on their " recovering Britain, and thereby provid- " ing for the ſubſiſtence and ſecurity of " the frontier provinces.

" On the coming of Julian, with the title " of Cæſar, into Gaul, when he found thoſe " provinces in the utmoſt diſtreſs, as well " as the greateſt danger, his firſt care was " to ſettle the peace, and reſtore the com- " merce of Britain, from whence he drew " more than once, eight hundred ſhip " loads of corn, without which he could " never have extricated himſelf from the " difficulties he was in, or attained ſuch " a degree of power as lifted him to the " empire. New troubles ariſing, and new

" Emperors being ſet up, ſome of them " here, the whole ſtrength of the iſland, " after numerous armies raiſed in, and " frequently, when tranſported abroad, " recruited and reinforced from hence, " was at length totally exhauſted, and the " country ſo depopulated, as inſtead of " affording, as formerly, a continual ſup- " port to, it became a burthen on, a de- " clining empire. The continual irrup- " tions of the barbarous nations into the " Roman provinces, in Britain, quickly " compleated their ruin, ſo that it was " not only ſpoiled and rendered deſart, " but the very people, and with them the " arts they had acquired, were, in a " great meaſure, exterminated and extin- " guiſhed.

" It was more than a century before " theſe troubles totally ſubſided, and the " Saxons, who were invited as auxiliaries, " becoming more cruel enemies than the

" Picts

" Picts and Scots, fixed themſelves fully
" in their reſpective principalities, and,
" then, in the firſt intervals of peace, be-
" gan to improve them. But, when they
" once ſet about this, and more eſpecially
" after they had embraced the Chriſtian
" religion, they made great progreſs, and
" ſoon revived the credit of this country,
" for plenty and hoſpitality. The excel-
" lency of their conſtitution, the juſtice
" of their laws, their regular plan of po-
" licy, but, above all, their equal diſtri-
" bution of land, not only produced, but
" ſecured a general, conſtant and tho-
" rough cultivation. We preſerve more
" certain proofs of this, than even the
" moſt authentic hiſtories could afford, in
" the number of cities and great towns,
" and the almoſt innumerable villages
" raiſed, and many of them named, by
" theſe intelligent and induſtrious people,
" in the Cathedrals, Colleges, and Mo-
" naſteries,

" naſteries, which they erected and en-
" dowed with lands, which their Eccleſi-
" aſtics took care to improve to the ut-
" moſt, in the ſyſtem of their rural eco-
" nomy, which they eſtabliſhed, and
" which ſtill in a great meaſure ſubſiſts,
" and in the terms made uſe of in all
" things relative to huſbandry, which
" moſt of them, at leaſt, are retained
" among us to this day.

" We have alſo ſufficient evidence to
" convince us, that, though this country
" was then fully peopled, our harveſts not
" only ſufficed to feed them plentifully,
" but ſupplied alſo a very large exporta-
" tion. Hence it was the Emperor
" Charles the Great called Britain, the
" granary of the Weſtern world. This
" commerce enabled the renowned King
" Edgar, to form thoſe numerous fleets,
" which were at once the guard and glory
" of his dominions. In ſucceeding and

" leſs

" leſs happy times, the wealth accumu-
" lated by this lucrative trade, (for riches
" or rather ſigns of riches, gold and ſilver,
" could be brought hither no other way,)
" enabled his ſucceſſors to procure ſome
" temporary reliefs to their ſubjects, by
" thoſe ſubſidies which bore the title of
" Danegeld: which tax was raiſed for
" different purpoſes, ſometimes to engage
" the Danes to retire, ſometimes to raiſe
" forces againſt them, and, at length, as
" an ordinary revenue. The rate, alſo,
" was different. Originally two, after-
" wards four, and even ſix ſhillings, on
" every hide or plow land in the king-
" dom; which ſhews, that the Saxons
" relied on their land and its produce."

It hath, alſo, been contended, that ſo much ſkill, labour and expence are requiſite to raiſe even a moderate crop, that to account for the tenth part of that which hath

hath been acquired by ſuch unremitted toil and attention, hath been found burthenſome to the individual, and hath ſo far checked the exertions of the farmer, and prevented him from adding to that increaſe which he ſends to market, that thereby the price of corn hath been enhanced, by a non-increaſe adequate to the regular demand for it, to the great injury of population, &c. &c.

To attribute ſuch an evil conſequence to the payment of the tenth part of the landed produce in tithes, is a moſt direct contradiction to the preſent ſtate of the population, agriculture, landed rental, manufactures, trade, commerce and navigation of the kingdom. We have ſeen, in the foregoing extract from *The Political Survey of Great Britain*, that the ſoil of Britain is naturally fertile, and, at the time of eſtabliſhing the payment of tithes by the Saxons, was eminently productive

of

of corn. However, it is granted, that the ſtate of Agriculture in England, in times immediately ſubſequent to the Saxon period, could not have been, either ſo very flouriſhing or productive. For, though "Under the Saxons," to reſume the quotation from *The Political Survey of Great Britain*, "this country was fully peopled, "and fully cultivated, and the nation in "general rich, happy, and in ſome de-"gree luxurious, yet the Danes, who "were tempted thereby, to make deſcents "upon different parts of the ſea-coaſts in "order to plunder, and, encouraged by "ſucceſs, at laſt to invade and render "themſelves maſters of ſeveral ſpots in "the maritime countries, harraſſed, de-"populated, and, in a great meaſure, de-"ſtroyed the whole.

"Theſe diſtractions, with little inter-"miſſion, continued for three centuries, "and had ſuch an effect on the country

"as

" as well as on the people, that, together
" with the great changes in the genius
" and ſpirit of the government, by the
" coming in, firſt of the Danes, and then
" of the Normans, as in the midſt of an
" impoveriſhed and deſolated nation, left a
" bitter remembrance of paſt plenty, with
" ſcarce any proſpect of future recovery.
" We have a very ſingular and deciſive
" inſtance of the truth of this, in the ſa-
" tisfaction and admiration expreſſed by
" a judicious author in thoſe times, on
" the deſcription of a Saxon Monaſtery
" (Thorney Abbey, in Cambridgeſhire,
" ſituated in the midſt of fens and mar-
" ſhes) and of the country around it,
" which, from the peculiarity of its ſitu-
" ation, had eſcaped the almoſt univerſal
" ruin.

" After the Norman government be-
" came ſomewhat more ſettled, agricul-
" ture was either ſo little encouraged, or

" ſo

" ſo indifferently underſtood, that, what
" from the variation of ſeaſons, from the
" frequency of civil commotions, and re-
" peated foreign wars, there was a conti-
" nual fluctuation between great, but
" very tranſient, periods of plenty and
" extreme ſcarcity, nay, ſometimes down-
" right famine; and, as an inſtance of
" this in the ſhort ſpace of fourteen years,
" from 1244 to 1258, wheat was once at
" 13s. 4d. twice at 16s. and once at 24s.
" per quarter, though once within that
" ſpace of time ſo low as 2s. Neither,
" were thoſe before mentioned the higheſt
" prices; for, in twelve years after this
" period, in 1270, wheat was 4l. 16s. od.
" (of our money, nearly 13l. 19s. od.) per
" quarter, and, at ſome times, and in
" ſome places, it went even higher. In
" theſe circumſtances, they had not only
" a notion of importing to relieve their
" neceſſities, but of exporting alſo to keep

" up

" up the price of their own grain. But, " both being ſubject to licences and other " incumbrances, they neither of them " anſwered any general or public pur- " poſe."

However, notwithſtanding the depreſſed and precarious ſtate of agriculture, during the ſtricteſt ages of the feudal ſyſtem, it ſeems from the tables of the prices of wheat, given in the eſſay on *The Wealth of Nations*, that, as the ſpirit of the villenage tenure gradually ſoftened and evaporated, which was effected by the exhortations and examples of the Clergy, the dormant ſpirit of agriculture began to raiſe its head, and to revive accordingly. This may be inferred, from the progreſſive decreaſe in the prices of wheat, from the beginning of the thirteenth, to the middle of the ſixteenth century. *Smith* hath collected theſe, as often as they could be aſcertained, whether high or low, and taken

taken an average from the twelve prices immediately following each other. Thus, the average price of a quarter of wheat, for twelve years, between 1202 and 1286, was 2l. 19s. 1d.; between 1287 and 1338, 1l. 18s. 8d.; between 1339 and 1416, 1l. 5s. 9d.; between 1423 and 1451, 1l. 1s. 3d.; between 1453 and 1497, 14s. 1d.; and, between 1499 and 1560, 10s. 0d.

It cannot be ſaid, that the very conſiderable reduction, from 1l. 1s. 3d. to 10s. per quarter, in little more than a century, was ſolely or principally cauſed by the influx of American wealth, becauſe the greateſt proportion of the decreaſe appears to have taken place, before any effect could poſſibly have been experienced, politically or nationally, from the diſcovery of the Weſtern continent. A more active, immediate, adequate and deeply-rooted cauſe may be traced out, in that

prodigious increaſe of the population of England, (and in the conſequent improvement of her ſoil,) which had come to paſs in the courſe of the two preceding centuries.

If it be allowed, that an increaſe of population is a ſtrong and rational teſtimony, in favour of the flouriſhing ſtate and internal improvement of a country, England, at the very time of which we are ſpeaking, poſſeſſed, in this reſpect, the moſt irrefragable marks. Notwithſtanding the numerous foreign wars and cruſades, in which ſhe had been engaged, and the internal diſſentions, revolutions, inſurrections, famines and peſtilences, with which ſhe had been ſo fatally and repeatedly harraſſed from the æra of the Norman invaſion, ſhe had moſt aſtoniſhingly increaſed her inhabitants. At the Conqueſt, her population is ſtated to have been about 2,000,000 of ſouls; which, in the courſe

courſe of the two following centuries, increaſed ſo ſlowly, that, in 1377, it amounted to only 2,353,000, according to a calculation founded on a Subſidy Roll of that year ſtill extant. Its increaſe, however, during the two ſucceeding ages, was ſo great and wonderful, that, in 1575, it was nearly doubled, reaching to 4,688,000 ſouls, of which 1,172,000 were men capable of bearing arms. (See, *Chalmers's Comparative Eſtimate.*)

Now this rapid increaſe in population could not have taken place, without a proportionate increaſe in the means of ſubſiſtence: a number of people infer abundance of food; the former is ſo dependent on and connected with the latter, being, as it were, an immediate conſequence, that a flouriſhing population is uſually undeniable evidence of an abundant plenty of the neceſſaries of life. But, this abundant plenty could not have been procured

by importation, ſince the few attempts made towards it, according to *Campbel*, either wholly failed or proved ineffectual. Muſt it not, therefore, be, more juſtly and truly, aſcribed to internal reſources,---to the progreſs of cultivation and agricultural improvement, encouraged and aſſiſted by trade and commerce?

The ſpirit of licentiouſneſs, incident to all weak governments, like thoſe founded on the feudal ſyſtem, hath at all times depreſſed and diſcouraged agriculture.--- Nor, ought we to wonder, that, in England, agriculture ſhould have been ſo little regarded in a political view, or ſo badly managed by the individuals employed in it, at thoſe periods, when there was no ſecurity to the perſon and property, and, conſequently, no inducement to the occupation, of a farmer. The ſubſiſtence of themſelves and families, muſt have been the principal motive of thoſe, who followed

lowed the employment. It is irrational to imagine, that men would, unconſtrained, ſeriouſly and deeply engage in a buſineſs, whoſe returns were precarious, from the fluctuation of the prices of the articles of their produce, and from the unſettled and ferocious ſtate of ſociety.--- Length of time, more civilized manners, more frequent intercourſe with other nations, greater perſonal freedom, more defined ſtability of landed property, and the poſſibility of acquiring it, were requiſite to give a progreſſive and due ſpring to the efforts of human induſtry. And, accordingly, we find, that national civilization, commerce and cultivation, have kept mutual and gradual pace with each other.

From the time of Henry the Seventh, may be dated, our firſt attempts towards a refinement of manners, and the extenſion of commerce, and our earlieſt material ſteps towards the improvement of

agriculture. By permitting the Nobility to alienate their ancient eſtates, Henry the Seventh, not only effectually broke their power, and clipped the wings of their hereditary ſplendour, but he put the acquiſition of landed property, within the reach of every thriving and induſtrious individual, and thereby gave an additional energy to agricultural exertions. In this reign, it is true, the nobility and gentry began to favour the notion of grazing being more profitable than tillage, and, in conſequence thereof, incloſures were multiplied: but, as the progreſs of them was attended by complaints and commotions, various acts were made by Henry the Seventh, Henry the Eighth, and Edward the Sixth, to prevent the converſion of arable land into paſture; and, on the gift or ſale of the poſſeſſions of the Religious Houſes, ſuppreſſed in the time of Henry the Eighth, it was particularly enjoined,

joined, that all ſuch land, as had been kept in a ſtate of tillage, for the laſt twenty years by the late proprietors, ſhould be continued therein, under the penalty of 6l. 13s. 4d. a month.

In Elizabeth's reign, ſeveral acts were paſſed for the encouragement and improvement of agriculture, on principles of the trueſt and ſoundeſt policy; and, if we may judge from the price of corn in her reign, were attended with good conſequences. Under James the Firſt and Charles the Firſt, proclamations were iſſued, and acts ſtill paſſed, in favour of the national agriculture, though not productive of that attention and ſpirit of induſtry, which aroſe under the Commonwealth, and was ſo highly beneficial in ſucceeding times, notwithſtanding it could not counteract the ſcarcity, too frequently prevalent at that period. On the Reſtoration of the regal form of Government,

this ſpirit of agricultural improvement was not loſt, but exerted itſelf in fuller vigour. Our domeſtic intereſts, and the benefit of an increaſed commercial intercourſe with foreign ſtates, were ably inveſtigated, and, neceſſarily, more clearly underſtood; and the poſſibility of rendering corn an important native export, being ſufficiently aſcertained, a multiplicity of acts were paſſed, in this and the reign of James the Second, and of William and Mary, to promote this great and extenſive concern.

Nor, hath this object been ſince neglected by the ſubſequent Legiſlature, having been conſtantly and warmly ſupported, according to the exigency of the times, by different arrangements and occaſional modifications in the import and export laws, the moſt judicious in themſelves, and the moſt beneficial to all ranks of people,---equally guarding againſt the impo-

impoveriſhment of the agricultural intereſt by too great a reduction, and againſt the injury of the community by too great a riſe, in the price of corn,---and contributing, as far as human policy can, to the increaſe of the chief neceſſary of life, without deſtroying the reaſonable profits to be derived from the cultivation of it.

" To judge," ſays the author of *The Wealth of Nations*, " of the improved ſtate " of any country, it is neceſſary to com- " pare its ſtate at different former pe- " riods, which ſhould be diſtinct from " each other, but not ſo as to loſe all con- " nection. And, if we find its annual " landed produce and labour, its trade " and its manufactures, to have increaſed " and to be ſtill flouriſhing, we have the " moſt undoubted proof of ſuch a ſtate " having been greatly improved in its " capital or riches. Notwithſtanding the " various publications, that have been

" iſſuing

" iſſuing from the preſs ever ſince the " Reſtoration, proving the decay of this " kingdom, in population, agriculture, " trade, commerce and manufactures, yet, " moſt aſſuredly, the ſtate of this king- " dom is far beyond the ſtate of it at the " Reſtoration; at which period, it far ex- " ceeded the ſtate of it in Queen Eliza- " beth's time, when, we may juſtly pre- " ſume, it was far beyond its ſtate during " the wars of York and Lancaſter, during " which period, however, it is reaſonable " to believe it far exceeded the times of " the feudal ages*."

Accordingly, the preceding review of the ſtate of our national agriculture during the prevalence of the feudal ſyſtem, and under the auſpices of the Legiſlature for the laſt three hundred years, ſhews,

* I have here omitted the laſt part of *Smith*'s comparative ſtate of the kingdom at different periods, namely, that " In the times " of the feudal ages, it excelled the days of the Saxon heptarchy," becauſe the quotations, before given from *The Political Survey of Great Britain*, prove, that it was very inferior.

that,

that, notwithſtanding it greatly ſuffered, and, at times, might have been materially diminiſhed, during the rigour of the feudal tenure, it improved on the whole;---that, in proportion as that ſevere ſyſtem relaxed, agriculture made quicker advances, and, as ſoon as the effects of our national commerce began to be felt, improved ſo rapidly and to ſuch an extent, as to ſupply 4,500,000 of population, where it had formerly ſupported only 2,000,000; ---and that ſince, under the foſtering hand of a free conſtitution, it hath ariſen to ſuch a flouriſhing ſtate, in conſequence of its own improvement, and as connected with the increaſe of our population, manufactures, trade and commerce, as to ſupply food to above 8,000,000 of inhabitants; that is, to nearly double the number it ſupplied two hundred years ago, to above treble the number it ſupported about four hundred years ago, and to above

above four times as many as it nouriſhed ſeven hundred years ago.

In, thus, ſlightly tracing the progreſs of the agriculture of this kingdom, through its different ſtages, from the introduction of the feudal ſyſtem to the cloſe of the eighteenth century, though I have taken no notice of tithes, the ſubject hath not been forgotten.

And, from what hath been advanced, it appears, that, notwithſtanding the practice of paying tithes, in kind or by compoſition, exiſted throughout the whole period before mentioned, the progreſſive improvement of the national agriculture hath not been prevented. Its progreſs hath been gradual, though it is granted, until about the æra of the Reformation, it was ſlow and uncertain. Till that time, the Clergy were the chief, if not the ſole, friends and ſupporters of agriculture, and to whom, indeed, the reſtoration of agri-

culture,

culture, and the re-cultivation of the lands, which had fallen into almoſt a ſtate of nature, under the violence and ferocity of the earlier feudal ages, is principally to be aſcribed,---the Monks and Clergy having been, not only the Miniſters of Religion, the Founders and Patrons of Schools, and the Promoters of Literature, but, alſo, the beſt Farmers in the kingdom.

During the two laſt centuries, and more eſpecially, ſince it became a peculiar national concern, our agriculture, in its produce and the ſuperior eaſe with which it is carried on, hath been moſt aſtoniſhingly and rapidly improved; ſo that, England, at this very time, is not only the firſt in all other arts and ſciences, but eminently conſpicuous, for the knowledge, progreſs and encouragement of agriculture. The produce of her lands hath been moſt wonderfully multiplied, by changes and improvements in the modes and implements

of

of huſbandry, and by the incloſure and cultivation of her waſtes and commons. And her yeomanry and farmers enjoy a degree of ſecurity, independence and reſpectability, unknown to thoſe of ſimilar occupations, in other European countries.

In proof of the great increaſe of the products of our agriculture, notwithſtanding the oppreſſive, impolitic and ruinous burthen of tithes, as it is called, may be mentioned, that, ſince the eſtabliſhment of the bounties on the exportation of corn, a ſingle inſtance of great dearth of corn (as it hath been remarked in *Chalmers's Comparative Eſtimate*,) hath not been noticed in England. And, how much this bounty hath contributed to the encouragement and improvement of agriculture, is obvious from the immenſe and comparatively new branch of trade which immediately aroſe in conſequence of it,

and

and from the few ſuſpenſions of the act, which, till of late years, have taken place.

Thirty years ago, the produce of England in grain, in a fruitful harveſt, was computed to be equal to the conſumption of its inhabitants for four years, provided, no part of it was allowed to be exported to foreign countries. And, thirty years ago, the export of corn alone was equal to above five ſevenths of the total exports of the kingdom in 1354, (the twenty-eighth of Edward the Third,) --- the average quantity of grain exported annually for nineteen years, ending 1764, having amounted to 545,000l. per annum, even deducting the value of the corn imported during the ſame interval. In five years, from 1744 to 1748, the value of our exported corn was above 8,000,000l. ſterling. Between the years 1741 and 1750, the quantity of all ſorts of grain exported, was 8,000,000 of quarters, and the bounty money

money on that exportation, amounted to 1,500,000l. ſterling. And, in 1750, in particular, we exported above a fifth part of the whole growth of our wheat; and, in that year, the bounty money on all exported grain, amounted to 325,405l.

According to the author of the *Tracts on the Corn Trade*, the average proportion of corn, annually exported to that produced in the kingdom, was formerly as one to thirty-one,---and the average quantity annually imported, did not exceed a five hundred and ſeventy-one part of the conſumption, ---and, ſince the firſt eſtabliſhment of the bounty, the price of the corn exported, valued very moderately, had exceeded that of the corn imported, valued very high, by a much greater ſum than the amount of the bounties paid during the ſame period. For the firſt ſixty-four years of this century, the average price of wheat was 36s. per quarter, and was under that

of

of the laſt ſixty years of the preceding century, full a fifth part. From 1731 to 1740, it was rather more than 32s. per quarter; and, from 1741 to 1750, it was ſtill lower, being about 30s. per quarter.

However, it cannot be denied, that, ſince the year 1764, the price of corn hath been advanced. But, let not this increaſe in the price, be attributed to a decreaſe in the quantity grown, from the operation of tithes (either in kind or by compoſition) on the cultivation of corn.

We have ſeen, what a progreſs our agriculture hath made, and to what a flouriſhing ſtate it hath ariſen, under the ſuppoſed preſſure and impolicy of tithes, for nine hundred years, through all the various viciſſitudes of our national government, and the low condition of our population at particular periods, together with the confined circumſtances of our internal as well as external reſources:---

Why, then, ſhould the payment of tithes be now productive of more fatal conſequences, and, in more ſettled and better times, impede the progreſſive improvement of our agriculture, when there is every inducement to more active and induſtrious exertions in the occupation, from the extenſion of our population, manufactures, trade and commerce, and when the returns from agriculture are double, if not treble, to thoſe received by our anceſtors, and may be depended on from the certainty of a market?

The increaſed price of corn ſhould be attributed to other cauſes, than the operation of tithes. Poſſibly no one, amongſt many more to be mentioned hereafter, is more likely to be true, or more capable of producing ſuch an effect, than the general deſtruction of farms upon a moderately ſmall ſcale. By the conſolidation of ſuch farms as theſe, and forming them anew

into

into others of greater and more conſiderable extent, the body of farmers is leſſened in number; competition is taken away; and combinations are more eaſily made, as often as avarice ſhall think it neceſſary, either to keep up the price, or to enhance the value, of the products of the ſoil. And, that the price of corn, and of other agricultural produce, hath moſt undoubtedly been much raiſed by ſuch practices and artifices, and which hath not proceeded from a deficiency in the quantity of corn grown, is well known to thoſe who reſide in the counties, where large farms are too much encouraged.

The author of *Hints to Gentlemen of Landed Property*, is moſt decidedly of the opinion, that large and overgrown farms are public evils, and are productive of artificial ſcarcity; he is, therefore, as decidedly, an opponent of them. It would be doing him injuſtice, to abridge what

he hath ſaid on the ſubject; and more eſpecially, ſince, at the ſame time, he alſo evinces in the cleareſt light, the benefits reſulting from the landed property in the poſſeſſion of eccleſiaſtical and other corporate bodies, (which hath been frequently ſuggeſted to be injurious to the community,) from the moderate and ſizeable farms into which it is divided, and from the peculiar tenures by which it is holden.

"Eſtates," ſays he, "held under Ec-
"cleſiaſtical Lords, Collegiate or Corpo-
"rate Bodies, are, at this time, one of
"the greateſt ſupports this country hath
"for its population. Notwithſtanding
"little farms are engroſſed, and cottages
"demoliſhed on other eſtates, their's,
"from the nature of the tenure, ſtill re-
"main nearly the ſame, and continue to
"yield their proportion of that advan-
"tage, which this country formerly de-

"rived

" rived from ſmaller farms than now " ſubſiſt.

" Upon manours where any of the be- " fore mentioned bodies preſide, a life no " ſooner drops, in an eſtate held under " them, than they are ready to fill up " the vacancy, in favour of the heirs of " its former poſſeſſor; for, having only " a life-intereſt in it, or perhaps not ſo " much, as preferment often removes " them, they are glad to ſeize all imme- " diate benefits which accrue, and never " look forward, like a lay-lord, to the " future advantages his family may ac- " quire, by waiting for the reverſion " after the exiſting lives. For theſe rea- " ſons, upon manours of this ſort, popu- " lation muſt, and does wear a better face " than in other diſtricts.

" When a man is a copyhold or life- " leaſehold tenant, it gives a ſtronger " ſpur to his induſtry, than when he is

" tenant at will, or on a ſhort term of
" years, to the ſame quantity of land.
" He will be encouraged to undertake
" improvements, and will obtain a much
" greater produce. He will alſo be better
" enabled to marry, and much encouraged
" to do it; becauſe he hath the means to
" ſupport a family, and to make ſome
" proviſion for them, in caſe any accident
" ſhould happen to himſelf.

" And, when young women are left
" with little eſtates of this ſort, they are
" better enabled to provide for them-
" ſelves ſuitable huſbands.

" Theſe eſtates, preſerving their ori-
" ginal form more than any other, and
" being, in general, of a ſmall ſize, pro-
" duce more poultry, pigs and dairy ar-
" ticles, than larger eſtates, and are much
" more beneficial to the community.---
" Many gentlemen of landed property
" are ſo fond of freehold, that they af-

" fect

" fect to deſpiſe every other tenure; and
" I have heard ſome lament, that there
" was ſuch a thing exiſting, as copyhold
" or leaſehold. Such perſons are, gene-
" rally, the greateſt advocates for large
" farms: but, if theſe were to prevail
" univerſally, we ſhould ſoon feel the
" dreadful conſequence; for, then, every
" ſource of plenty would be checked,
" and population receive an irrecoverable
" blow.

" Since little farms have been ſwal-
" lowed up in greater, there are thou-
" ſands of pariſhes which do not ſupport
" ſo many cows as they did, by fifty or
" ſixty in a pariſh; and the inhabitants
" have decreaſed in proportion. If Church
" and College tenures were ſet aſide, this
" devaſtation would ſpread wider.

" Theſe tenures, and all copyholds un-
" der lay-lords, which are not liable to
" revert, have another advantage. They

" are purchaſed at a ſmaller price, com-
" pared with freehold, which makes it
" eaſier for a man of a ſmall capital, to
" procure an inheritance; and, as the title
" is always clear, this is another great
" recommendation of them.

" The good effects I have enumerated,
" which flow from copyhold and leaſe-
" hold tenures, ſhew the benefits reſult-
" ing from ſmall farms, in a very ſtrong
" light; and thoſe, who perſiſt in the
" ruinous practice of throwing too much
" land into one man's hands, are blind to
" their own intereſt, and deaf to the cries
" of humanity."

There are many other cauſes, to which the increaſed price of corn may be attributed, without injuriouſly and falſely aſcribing it to the operation of tithes.---Theſe are,---the riſe of rents,---the large tracts of arable land, which of late years have been converted into paſture, on account

count of the ſuperior profits derived from grazing,---the quantity of grain uſed in fattening of cattle, of which a greater ſupply is requiſite from the change adopted in our mode of living,---the enlarged cultivation of vegetables, with natural and artificial graſſes, in conſequence of multiplying cattle, in order to produce a greater quantity of animal manure,---the increaſing conſumption of grain, in our breweries, diſtilleries, and manufactories of ſtarch and hair-powder,---the abominable and iniquitous practice of ſpeculation, foreſtalling and monopoly,---and, above all, as the firſt and great cauſe, the increaſed demand for corn, in conſequence of our flouriſhing population, manufactures, trade and commerce. All theſe together, with the annihilation of the ſmaller farms, are adequate to the effect produced, and have been, moſt undoubtedly, the true cauſes of raiſing the price of corn within the laſt thirty years.

This

This riſe, which began between the years 1760 and 1770, (and for the firſt ten or twelve years continued to advance, in conſequence of a ſucceſſion of bad ſeaſons,) hath been ſtated by the adverſaries of tithes, to have proceeded from a decreaſe in the quantity of corn grown; which, they ſay, is ſo far diminiſhed, and become inſufficient for the conſumption of the kingdom, that our markets are dependent on other countries for a conſtant ſupply,---and that this deficiency is to be placed, ultimately, to the account of paying tithes. And, to prove this diminution and inſufficiency of the corn produced within the kingdom, they ſtate farther, from an official report made in the year 1790, that, for eighteen years ending 1788, inſtead of exporting corn annually to the amount of 651,000l. we were neceſſitated to import to the amount of 291,000l. a year.

This

This circumſtance proves, indeed, that a very conſiderable importation took place in the courſe of theſe eighteeen years, but does not prove, that the annual growth of the kingdom was unequal to its conſumption.

A ſlight knowledge of the corn acts (chiefly, the act of the 13th of Geo. III.) in force, throughout nearly the whole of the period, will ſhew, that, under the regulations which then governed the exportation and importation of corn, it was in the power of thoſe, who were intereſted in ſuch manœuvres, and whenever it ſuited their purpoſes, to have opened any particular port or ports, in regard to importation, and to have continued ſuch a practice, at intervals, for a ſucceſſion of years: ſo that corn might have been imported at certain places, whilſt the general average price of the article, throughout the kingdom, might have been ſo low, as to have allowed even an exportation of it.

And,

And, as, under the proviſions of the corn acts, the ports could have been ſhut, in reſpect to importation, only at the regular return of the Quarter Seſſions, whilſt, in reſpect to exportation, they could have been opened any intermediate week, if neceſſary, it was eaſy for the factors, by having artificially raiſed the price of corn in a given diſtrict to the requiſite height, juſt before the Quarter Seſſions, to have cauſed any particular port to have been opened for importation, (and, of courſe, to have been continued open, for the enſuing three months,) and, by theſe means, to have been at full liberty, during that time, to have imported any quantity of corn, at the low duty of ſixpence per quarter. And which very corn, by a little farther management, in having reduced the price to the ſtandard for opening the ports for exportation, they might have very ſoon exported again, either with the drawback, or, (if they had been hack-

hackneyed in the routine and chicane of cuſtom-houſe tranſactions,) poſſibly, even with a bounty thereon of 5s. per quarter, under the falſified Manifeſt or Certificate of its being of Britiſh growth.

The conſequence of the inſufficiency in the proviſions of the then exiſting corn acts, was, that the moſt notorious and enormous abuſes were practiſed on the revenue: but, notwithſtanding ſuch fraudulent and grievous practices were known to the Legiſlature ſo early as the year 1783, ſome years elapſed before any attempt was made, towards the future prevention of them. And, in proof of part of what hath been aſſerted above, may be mentioned a fact, which occurred in the port of Liverpool, about the latter end of the foregoing period of eighteen years.

At the Michaelmas Seſſions, in the year 1786, it having been certified on oath to the Grand Jury, that corn was at ſuch a price

price as to admit of an importation at the low duties, an order was accordingly made for opening the port of Liverpool, for the importation of wheat, flour, &c. till the next ſeſſions: during which interval of time, there were imported at Liverpool, upwards of 32,500 quarters of wheat and flour; whilſt the Gazette proves, that, in the laſt ſix months of the year 1786, the average price of wheat was only 1l. 15s. 10½d. per quarter (that is, 8s. per quarter under the price which opens the ports for importation) in the port of London, and in the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Eſſex, Kent and Suſſex, ſtill lower; ſo that, in the port of London, and in the ports of theſe five counties, an exportation was taking place with the bounty annexed, when, at the ſame time, in the port of Liverpool, an importation was going on at the low duties.

Nor,

Nor, does the circumſtance of our having annually imported corn to the amount of 291,000l. during the eighteen years ending 1788, inſtead of our having annually exported it, as formerly, to the amount of 651,000l. prove the inſufficiency of our home-produced corn for the conſumption of the kingdom, to be occaſioned by a decreaſe in the quantity grown, on account of the payment of tithes.

Tithes exiſted, at the time we were able to export to double the amount, which we have been ſo lately obliged, by temporary cauſes, to import. If, then, the operation of tithes was not able to prevent an exportation at one period, why ſhould the ſame cauſe be able to effect an importation at another? For, if the operation of tithes did not depreſs the cultivation of corn, when the price of it was low from the great quantity grown, why ſhould tithes obſtruct it, when that cultiva-

cultivation (as it is ſaid) may poſſibly be decreaſed, and, on that account, the price of what is grown, moſt certainly increaſed; ſo that the value of what is produced, is more than proportionably enhanced to the growers of it?

The preceding ſtatement of our importation for eighteen years, may, indeed, ſeemingly prove the fact, without developing or proving the neceſſity of it: which may be partly diſcovered, (in conjunction with the cauſes before aſſigned, and the tricks and artifices of corn factors, ſpeculators, monopolizers, &c.) in the alterations which the cultivators of our lands have adopted, in the management of their farms, and which tend more to their advantage, than the cultivation of corn. Nor, ought we to wonder, that, from the ſuperior advantages ariſing from grazing, our intereſted farmers ſhould have turned their thoughts towards paſturage, in union with

with tillage; by which plan the cultivation of corn, in particular parts of the kingdom, perhaps, may be ſomewhat decreaſed. And, if, upon actual inveſtigation, it ſhould turn out to be an incontrovertible fact, that England, for ſome years paſt, hath not experienced the benefit of a corn export, yet let it be called to mind, how amply this loſs hath been compenſated by the immenſe increaſe of her population.

But, however, this decreaſe, in the cultivation of corn, (if there be, really, any foundation for ſuch an opinion,) will moſt probably be found, in the neighbourhood of great cities and manufacturing towns, and on the coaſt. There being, in the neighbourhood of great cities and manufacturing towns, an extenſive and regular demand for the ſtock of the grazier, with milk, vegetables, &c. and on the coaſt, an opportunity of carrying cattle,

butter, cheeſe, &c. to market at an eaſy rate, it ought not to be a matter of ſurpriſe, that, in ſuch places, and in ſuch ſituations, tillage ſhould rather decline: ſince the farmer can thus convert his land to a more profitable mode of management and cultivation, and be enabled from his increaſed profit, to purchaſe, even of a foreign market, that corn for the conſumption of his family, which he formerly uſed to raiſe himſelf.

To attribute, then, the high price of corn to the operation of tithes, is unfair and unjuſt, ſince the payment of tithes does not appear, in reality, to have had any effect upon the agriculture, population, wealth or proſperity of the kingdom: all which, of late years, have rapidly advanced, and under the protection of Providence, (notwithſtanding the wicked efforts of gloomy politicians and diſaffected ſubjects, to prove the deplorable

condition

condition and impending bankruptcy of the nation,) may be expected to continue to advance, with equal celerity and ſucceſs.

Under the genial and energetic influence of our free and happy Conſtitution, this is not an unreaſonable expectation. According to the author of *The Political Survey of Great Britain*, before quoted, "It is a matter beyond all diſpute, that "the beauty, and even the fertility of a "country, depend upon the policy, that "is, on the nature of the government to "which its inhabitants are ſubject."--- And, in confirmation of this, he inſtances Judea or Paleſtine, in particular; which, under the Jewiſh civil power, (---and, we may add, under the payment of above a fourth part of its landed produce in tithes,---) was rendered the moſt beautiful and fruitful region, though, now, under the iron hand of deſpotiſm, it hath

become, in compariſon of former days, a deſert. And, in England, ſince the ſettlement of our preſent Conſtitution, (which, "providing effectually for public power "and private ſecurity, by a due tempera-"ment of rational liberty with ſovereign "authority, forms the beſt of all govern-"ments, a Limited Monarchy,") the increaſe of our natural and artificial productions hath excited the wonder, envy and emulation of every other European nation.

It can ſcarcely admit of a doubt, that the alledged hardſhip and burthen of tithes have been made a mere pretence by clamorous and intereſted men, and a very ſtalking-horſe, as it were, in a particular publication: which publication, though originally calculated for the extenſion of important information, in order to aſſiſt and encourage the national agriculture, hath degenerated into a vehicle

of

of the falſeſt and moſt injurious inſinuation, miſrepreſentation and abuſe. Amongſt many other equally incorrect and unjuſt aſſertions, (to uſe no harſher words,) from time to time brought forward, "Go-
"vernment hath been therein charged,
"expreſsly, with extorting a prodigal ex-
"pence of a Church-Eſtabliſhment from
"the induſtry of the farmer:"---And, that "The Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Eſtab-
"liſhments ſeem to agree in the iniqui-
"tous principle of defrauding and op-
"preſſing the landed intereſt."

As the editor of the publication tells us, that "It is contrary to the rule of his
"work to inſert anonymous pieces," it follows, that the author of the paper alluded to, (which, though ſigned with the ſacred but proſtituted name of "Juſtice," hath no pretenſions to decency or truth,) was, moſt probably, not unknown to him. But---What opinion ſhall we form of ſuch

a writer, and of ſuch an editor? Shall we admire moſt, their wiſdom, their juſtice, their accuracy, their liberality of ſentiment, their modeſt expreſſions, or their dutiful obedience to the Government and Religion of their country?

It hath occaſioned much ſurpriſe, that any of the Clergy ſhould have continued to furniſh materials to the publication in queſtion:---in which, the form of government they are ſolemnly bound to ſupport, was attacked in the very foundations of it,---in which, the religious opinions of their country were groſsly inſulted,---in which, their own ancient and undeniably legal rights were boldly decried, and their holy character ſcoffed at and defamed,---in which, whilſt their communications were received with the moſt flattering and grateful acknowledgments, on the one hand, their national conſequence and ſubſiſtence were openly denied, on the other,---

other,---and in which, the editor, whilſt ſtating, that "The period is quickly ad-"vancing, when the people of England "with one voice will reſolve not to pay "tithes," indirectly inſinuates his wiſhes, that ſuch an attempt may ſpeedily be made, and gives every reaſon to expect, his concurrence in the plan, and his utmoſt aſſiſtance in the execution of it.

It hath alſo been contended, that the payment of tithes bears ſo hard on the ſkill, labour and expence of the farmer, that he hath no encouragement to improve his waſte lands, or even to make any improvements on thoſe which are already in a ſtate of cultivation: becauſe, the greater his exertions are, the greater will be his expence; and which expence will be farther virtually enhanced, by the deduction of the tenth part of his increaſed groſs produce: and that, there-

fore, it cannot be expected, that farmers will be induced to attempt multiplying their increaſe, under ſuch apparent and certain diſadvantages.

This, it muſt be confeſſed, is one of the moſt plauſible of the ſeveral objections, which are urged againſt the payment of tithes. But, it is built upon an error, which pervades almoſt every publication, which of late years hath iſſued from the preſs, in demonſtration of the burthen and evil conſequences of tithes. And this error conſiſts in a ſuppoſition, or an aſſumption, that tithes, in general, throughout the kingdom, are taken in kind, or compounded for at their utmoſt value,---than which, nothing can be more contrary to the fact itſelf.

The Clergy, unleſs prevented by the unfairneſs or obſtinate proceedings of their pariſhioners, for the moſt part, let their tithes at a moderately rated compoſition;

ſition; and that compoſition, being uſually fixed at an incumbent's firſt entering on his benefice, moſt frequently continues during his whole incumbency, and is augmented only by a riſe in the rental of the pariſh; and a very great number of the Clergy do not avail themſelves even of this circumſtance. Others again enter into compoſitions for longer or ſhorter terms of years, and always at ſuch rates, as ſecure to the farmer ample advantages, both in the common courſe of cultivation, or in any extraordinary exertions or improvements, which he might be inclined to make upon his farm.

Among the Impropriators, the practice of taking tithes in kind, unleſs by compulſion, does not much prevail, as they moſt commonly abide by a compoſition for a longer or ſhorter term of years: and, even amongſt thoſe Impropriators, who are averſe to entering into a compoſition for any length of time, they ſeldom take their

their tithes in kind, but a temporary compoſition for them; which, though varying from year to year, and, therefore, bearing a nearer proportion to the value of the crop on the ground, is, nevertheleſs, very conſiderably in favour of the farmer.

Thus, the advantages to be derived, from extra exertions, or in the common courſe of cultivation, the farmer, (as it is preſumable, he knows, what he is about to do,) may ſecure before hand, by fortifying himſelf within the line of a reaſonable compoſition. And, as to the advantages reſulting from the improvement of uncultivated land, he is not to be informed, that he is diſcharged, by act of Parliament, from any additional tithe charge, on account of that improvement, for the firſt ſeven years.

What, then, becomes of thoſe arguments, which are ſo pathetically detailed, and ſo ſtrenuouſly inſiſted on,---of the hardſhip, which the induſtrious farmer experi-

experiences, in paying the tenth part of the produce, drawn from his extra exertions and improvements, to thoſe who have contributed nothing to the expence, ---of the loſs, accruing to the farmer, from the want of the tenth part of the ſtraw of his corn produce, for the future manuring of his land,---of the loſs of grain, accruing to the public, from the ſetting out and carrying away ſuch ſmall quantities, as tithes uſually amount to,--- and of the loſs, accruing to the tithe holders themſelves, by the reduced price, at which the mixed produce of their tithes always ſells? Theſe laſt are all ideal loſſes. And, as to the hardſhip, which the farmer is ſaid to ſuffer, in having the tenth part of his produce taken away, it would be found, on examination, to be commonly his own fault, and unſupported by the general practice of tithe holders.

Beſides

Beſides---It is too abſurd to advance, that a farmer will not multiply the returns and products of his farm, as far as his capital extends, for his own ſake, notwithſtanding he is certain of being *robbed* of the tenth part of his produce or property, as the payment of tithes is, (to be ſure,) very *decently* and *juſtly* called; when we take into conſideration the *particular rent,* which every renter of land *pays* for *this tenth part,* and which is, *Nothing at all !!!*

The land occupier is not unapprized of the claim of tithe; he buys or rents his farm ſubject to it, and, in the purchaſe or taking of it, provides accordingly; he knows, that he is to account for the tenth part of the produce of his farm, in kind, if required; but he knows, at the ſame time, that, in general, he may compound for it, at a price very inferior to its real value,

value, and, perhaps, in an average ratio, not amounting to a twentieth or thirtieth part of the groſs produce of his farm.

As to the obſtacle, which the payment of tithes is ſaid to throw in the way of improving waſte and barren lands, this might eaſily be removed by the aſſiſtance of one ſingle act of Parliament, which, though it would entrench, for the preſent, on the right of the Clergy, would not, in the event, affect their intereſt,---Namely, to continue the compoſition for tithes, exiſting at the time of the improvement, for the firſt twenty-one years, next after the entering upon any improvement of waſte or barren land, in lieu of all tithes ariſing therefrom during the aforeſaid period. By ſuch a regulation, the farmer would have exactly the ſame inducement to improve the unprofitable lands of his farm, under the claim of tithes by the

Clergy,

Clergy, as he hath, under the claim of rent by his landlord.

Various ſtatements have been brought forward, in different publications, to ſhew, that the payment of tithes muſt neceſſarily prevent the exertions of the farmer, in order to improve his crops. Two of theſe, taken from the ſame pamphlet, ſhall be mentioned here more particularly. The firſt of them goes to eſtabliſh, as *a fact*, that, on a farm, conſiſting of 100 acres at the rent of 150l. per annum, with extra exertions in cultivation, there is an yearly outgoing, on account of tithes, of 80l.: and the ſecond, alſo, as an *equal fact*, that, on a farm, conſiſting of 100 acres at the rent of 50l. only per annum, without extra exertions in cultivation, there is an yearly outgoing, on account of tithes, of 36l.

It is the misfortune of warm reaſoners, ſometimes, to overſhoot themſelves, and, by unwarily

unwarily going too far, utterly to deſtroy the credibility of their own aſſertions, and, (as, in the preſent caſe,) to lay themſelves open to refutation. Thus, from the foregoing ſtatements, it appears, that, admitting all tithes to be actually taken in kind, there would then be a very conſiderable difference, in favour of the farmer who made extra exertions. For, though his rent be three times as much as the rent of the farmer, who made no ſuch extra exertions, he would experience a deduction, on account of tithes, equal only to eight fifteenths, or rather more than one half, of his rent; whilſt the other would experience a deduction, on the ſame account, equal to above ſeven tenths of his rent, without having made any attempt to counterbalance this important difference: which proves, that the farmer's additional labour and expence are rewarded, and that tithes are not the oppreſſive mill-

ſtone

ſtone on the neck of agricultural exertion, which they are intereſtedly reported to be.

But---As tithes are not actually taken in kind, but accounted for by compoſition, what credit can be given to the ſtatements juſt mentioned,---that, out of a farm of 100 acres at 150l. annual rent, there is an yearly outgoing from its groſs produce of 80l.---or, that, out of a farm of 100 acres at 50l. annual rent, there is an yearly outgoing from its groſs produce of 36l. on account of tithes? Who can believe ſuch to be facts? Are they not rather an illuſion, built on very queſtionable premiſes, and thoſe, poſſibly, miſ-ſtated, if not exaggerated? In the former ſtatement, the deduction or compoſition is equal to 10s. 8d. in the pound, and in the latter, to 14s. 5d. according to the rental of each farm.

But,

But, who ever heard of a compoſition, equal to the amount of either of the two, having been ſo paid, or even demanded? On the medium of them, it would exceed 11s. 6d. per acre, whether in graſs, tillage or fallow. And, it may be aſked,--- How will a valuation of all the tithes in the kingdom, built upon ſuch a medium calculation, accord with *Arthur Young*'s groſs amount of them at 5,000,000l. ſterling per annum, (and which hath been proved to be nearly three times as much as their real produce,) ſince, ſtating the titheable rental of the kingdom at 16,000,000l. and ſtating the tithed produce as equal to 11s. 7d. in the pound, (the medium of the two preceding ſums,) the collective value of tithes in England would be increaſed to above 9,000,000l. ſterling per annum?

But, indeed, a compoſition for rectorial and vicarial tithes, equal to 11s. 7d. in the

pound, moſt probably, was never thought of, in any part of the kingdom. It more than doubles the higheſt compoſition, known to the writer of this Eſſay, to have been ever received:---And, That was, not by a Clergyman, or even an Impropriator, but by a *Farmer, a grower and payer of tithes;* to whom a new Incumbent of a Rectory, in one of the moſt fertile counties in the kingdom, ſet his tithes for about a dozen years, (at a trifling increaſe, above his predeceſſor's terms,) in order to accommodate the patron of the living in a particular, though irrelative, reſpect: and who might have thought, perhaps, by this arrangement, to have ſecured the pariſhioners for ſome length of time, if not for the whole of the new Rector's incumbency, from any material increaſe of tithe compoſition, which was, reaſonably, to be expected, and could not, with decency, have been refuſed.

But,

But, this end was not anſwered: for the leſſee of the tithes immediately obliged his farming brethren to pay him a compoſition of 5s. 6d. in the pound, and continued it, without any mitigation, during the whole of the term. And, at the expiration of it, the Rector, fairly arguing, if his tithes were worth 5s. 6d. in the occupation of a farmer, that his pariſhioners could have no good reaſon to complain of paying him 3s. 6d. in the pound, he fixed it accordingly at that ſum,---though, upon his firſt taking poſſeſſion of the living, he was very deſirous of agreeing with his pariſhioners at 2s. 6d. in the pound, and, to induce them to it, would have given any ſecurity not to have increaſed that compoſition, during his incumbency.

This is one of the innumerable hoſt of inſtances, which might be adduced, to ſhew, how very oppreſſively farmers,

when tithe-holders and collectors, act towards each other, and how moderate the Clergy are in the compoſitions they are willing to receive for their tithes, if fairly treated; and that, where examples of rigorous exactneſs are to be cited, they are ſeldom, if ever, aſcribable to the Clergy, but to the Impropriators with their leſſees and tenants, and, more eſpecially, to thoſe farmers and tithe-proctors, to whom the Clergy and Impropriators are ſometimes obliged to ſet their tithes, through the caprice, obſtinacy, fraud and injuſtice of their pariſhioners; who, thus, expoſe themſelves to the tyranny and oppreſſion of thoſe who know full well the value of landed produce, and who, having no other motive to engage in the collection of tithes, than to enrich themſelves, will not abate the ſmalleſt part of their demand.

It will yet be ſaid, that, as the payment of tithes takes away the tenth part of the produce, and, conſequently, the tenth part of the profit which every man ought to gain upon the expenditure of his capital, it hath exactly the ſame effect, as if a tax of 10l. per cent. was laid upon all agricultural exertions and improvements; and that, therefore, a farmer muſt make 20l. per cent. of his money laid out, in order to ſecure 10l. per cent. profit to himſelf.

Though this is placing the operation of tithes in the moſt unfavourable light of which it will admit, it is nearly the ſame objection, as the laſt, comprized in different terms, and hath been already ſufficiently anſwered, being founded on the ſame erroneous principle, of all tithes being actually taken in kind, or compounded for at their utmoſt value: which hath been ſhewn to be ſo far from true in either reſpect, that, with few exceptions, it is

always in the power of the farmer to ſecure to himſelf an ample return, for all his exertions and improvements, by compounding for his tithes, at a very moderate rate in compariſon of their real value.

But, admitting the truth of the objection, for argument ſake,---Does it appear, that the progreſs of the national agriculture hath been, at all, impeded by it? On the contrary, hath not the national rental been wonderfully augmented within the laſt century, and which cannot be, more truly, aſcribed to any other ſource, than a progreſſive improvement in the cultivation of that ſoil, whence alone it is derived?

Again---Is the inveſtment of money in agricultural concerns, the only buſineſs or employment, in which the whole of the groſs returns or profit does not centre in the pocket of the inveſter? What ſhall we ſay of our manufactures, trade, commerce

commerce and navigation? If all the various taxes, deductions, reſtraints and impediments, (which are incident to theſe, and certainly check internal and external circulation and conſumption,) were removed,---Can any one doubt, that the profits, derived at preſent from them, would not be materially increaſed?

It hath been ſaid, that every new charge, impoſt or reſtraint, hitherto laid upon them, and, in particular, on manufactures, hath invigorated the induſtrious efforts, and in the event, multiplied the profits, of thoſe employed in them; and which may, indeed, be not improbable, ſince every year manifeſts the flouriſhing and increaſing ſtate of our manufactures and commercial concerns. And, again, it hath alſo been ſaid, that manufactures, &c. may be taxed too high, or too much loaded with regulations; becauſe manufactures cannot ſupport themſelves, under the preſ-

ſure of a confined market; and becauſe the advantages of a commercial intercourſe, being naturally fluctuating, may be wholly diverted or deſtroyed, in the courſe of a few years: whilſt the effects of exertions and improvements in agriculture, (the immediate ſource of its own ſupport and proviſion,) are more ſolid and durable.

It may, however, be reaſonably doubted, what would be the comparative ſtate and produce of agriculture, without the encouragement and aſſiſtance of manufactures, trade, commerce, and navigation. The author of *Eſſays on Huſbandry* ſays, that "In governments rightly managed, "there is no need of a competition or "parallel between trade and huſbandry, "for in all caſes they mutually aid and "aſſiſt each other." A celebrated writer, alſo, on the ſubject of Political Economy, *Herrenſchwand*, ſays, that "Agriculture is

"depend-

" dependent on manufactures." And, according to the author of *The Principles of Moral and Political Philoſophy*, " The " effect of trade upon agriculture is viſi- " ble in the neighbourhood of trading " towns, and in thoſe diſtricts which car- " ry on a communication with the mar- " kets of trading towns. The huſband- " men are buſy and ſkilful; the peaſantry " laborious; the land is managed to the " beſt advantage; and double the quan- " tity of corn and herbage raiſed from it, " of what the ſame ſoil yields in remoter " and more neglected parts of the coun- " try. Wherever a thriving manufactory " finds means to eſtabliſh itſelf, a new " vegetation ſprings up around it. I be- " lieve, it is true, that agriculture never " arrives at any conſiderable, much leſs " its higheſt degree of perfection, where " it is not connected with trade,---that " is, where the demand for the produce

" is

" is not increaſed by the conſumption of " trading cities."

Why, then, are our ears ſo continually aſſailed, if not abſolutely ſtunned, with the cry of " the Landed Intereſt,---the " Landed Intereſt?" Why are the neceſſity and policy of conſulting the welfare and improvement of it, ſo conſtantly and perſeveringly, brought forward to public notice? And, Why is that particular intereſt alone to be paramount and predominant, and to be cheriſhed and ſupported, at all events, in preference to every other? Are not our manufactures, trade, commerce and navigation of equal concern and conſequence?

In a late publication, an unguarded expreſſion---" Periſh our Commerce"---uſually, though wrongfully, attributed to a certain Honourable Member of the Houſe of Commons, hath been attacked with great ſpirit, and, I could wiſh to add, with

with great candour. It hath, however, given the writer of the pamphlet alluded to, an opportunity of deſcanting at large, on the commercial and trading intereſts of Great Britain. And, though no one, who is a friend and well-wiſher to his King and Country, can admit the general concluſion attempted from the publication, yet the ſcope of the writer's arguments evidently proves, that the manufactures, trade, commerce and navigation of this iſland, in the preſent ſtate of the world, are moſt materially connected with its political exiſtence, in the ſcale of great and powerful nations,---and, that the preſervation and extenſion of theſe are abſolutely requiſite to the ſupport of the national conſequence, and to give vigour to its internal reſources:---

Becauſe, though England may abound in the various natural and artificial products,

ducts, derived from a rich and fertile ſoil, and may be the firſt, amongſt European nations, for the excellence and ſuperiority of its materials and workmanſhip, it never can retain an adequate ſhare of national ſtrength and importance, without a commercial intercourſe with other States, to take off the overplus of our home conſumption, the ſurplus produce of our land and labour:---Thus, neceſſarily, giving an additional and due ſpring to the diligent toils of the huſbandman, to the ingenuity and ſkill of the manufacturer and mechanic, and to the adventurous ſpirit of the merchant and ſailor; and, eventually, multiplying the wealth, proſperity and greatneſs of the kingdom, far beyond their preſent condition, by the ſole operation of a foreign market.

If ſuch, then, be the high importance of our manufactures, trade, commerce and navigation,

navigation, I ſay, again, Are they not to be conſidered of, at leaſt, equal concern and conſequence with the landed intereſt?

The author of *The Wealth of Nations*, ſays, "That ſyſtem which repreſents the "produce of land as the ſole ſource of "the revenue and wealth of any country, "hath ſo far as I know, never been a-"dopted by any nation:"---and the author of *Eſſays on Huſbandry* remarks, that, "If agriculture be repreſented as ſup-"plying every thing, commerce and ma-"nufactures muſt decline." And, yet, the attempts of the preſent period tend to eſtabliſh the landed intereſt of this kingdom, as the ſure and only baſis of its dependence, ſupport and proſperity. It is become ſuch a prevailing opinion, that, from its agricultural exertions and improvements alone, this kingdom can and will neceſſarily command every other internal

internal and external advantage, that many ſcruple not to aſſert, that, in order to forward this great national view, the landed intereſt ought to be more favoured, if not wholly relieved, in reſpect to the burthens which lie ſo heavily upon it,---namely,---from tithes, land-tax and poor-rates.

But, to judge of the propriety and juſtice of ſuch a meaſure, it would be fair and right to compare the extent of the burthens, which are ſaid to prove ſo oppreſſive to the landed intereſt, with thoſe which ſo undeniably affect our manufactures, trade, commerce and navigation.

And, were it poſſible accurately to aſcertain the amount of the groſs produce of the latter, I am firmly perſuaded, that, in the diſtribution of the charges, incident to the ſupport and welfare of our Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhments, it would appear, that our manufactures, trade, commerce and navigation, in the courſe

courſe of internal and external conſumption and circulation, contribute more than an equitable proportion; ſo that the landed intereſt is favoured already, and, therefore, there can be no well-founded cauſe, why it ſhould receive additional favour at the expence of our other intereſts, which are equally neceſſary to the proſperity and conſequence of the kingdom.

So far from leſſening the charges on the landed intereſt, they might, in all apparent reaſon, be moderately increaſed, (and moſt probably, from motives of policy, and of juſtice towards certain claſſes in ſociety, they will ere long be increaſed;) ſince even then, they would not, I think, (and I have ſtrong grounds for my opinion,) exceed thoſe, made on our manufactures, trade, commerce and navigation.

But, if the reſtrictions and deductions annexed to our great intereſts, are to be light-

lightened or removed from off one part, why not from off the other alſo? Why ſhould not our manufacturers, traders and merchants attempt an alleviation or removal of the reſtraints and taxes, laid upon their occupations and intereſts?--- Have they not as good grounds to proceed upon,---and, Cannot they urge, that their intereſts are injured, their profits diminiſhed, and their exertions cramped, by this or that particular tax, impoſt, prohibition, &c. &c.?

In the United States of America, it was many years a point at iſſue, between the manufacturing and agricultural intereſts, which of them, in preference to and in excluſion of the other, ſhould be eſteemed the grand leading object of the national attention and encouragement. This conteſted point, as appears from *A Report by the Secretary to the Treaſury of the United States in* 1791, was indeed, at laſt, determined

determined in favour of agriculture,---however, not excluſively, but only ſo far as to allow it a pre-eminence. And the conſiderations, offered in *The Report*, " ſeem ſufficient to eſtabliſh, as general " propoſitions, that it is the intereſt of na- " tions to diverſify the induſtrious purſuits " of the individuals who compoſe them; " that the eſtabliſhment of manufactures " is calculated not only to increaſe the " general ſtock of uſeful and productive " labour, but even to improve the ſtate " of agriculture in particular; certainly " to advance the intereſts of thoſe engaged " in it."

Again---" The idea of an oppoſition " between theſe two intereſts, (manufac- " tures and agriculture,) is the common " error of the early periods of every coun- " try, but experience gradually diſſipates " it: indeed they are perceived ſo often " to ſuccour and befriend each other, that

" they come at length to be conſidered as " one; a ſuppoſition which has been fre- " quently abuſed, and is not univerſally " true. Particular encouragements of par- " ticular manufactures, may be of a nature " to ſacrifice the intereſts of landholders " to thoſe of manufacturers; but it is ne- " verthelefs a maxim well eſtabliſhed by " experience, and generally acknowledged " where there has been ſufficient experi- " ence, that the *aggregate* proſperity of " manufactures, and the *aggregate* pro- " ſperity of agriculture, are intimately " connected." (See, *The Report.*)

The author of *Eſſays on Huſbandry* compares " A nation diligently and induſtri- " ouſly employed, to a piece of tapeſtry- " work, where a certain texture of threads " and an union of colours, imperceptibly " woven and blended together, repreſent " agriculture, trade, commerce and the " mechanic arts. In mixing and harmo-

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" nizing theſe, conſiſts the great ſkill of
" the workman: And, except due care
" be taken in this point, the richeſt ma-
" terials will be weak, unpleaſing and
" uſeleſs. Therefore, though trade, com-
" mercial arts and huſbandry ſhould be
" all encouraged and ſupported in wiſe
" governments with ſcrupulous attention,
" yet ſtill the ſcale may be allowed to
" preponderate in favour of agriculture:
" But *that* in ſo ſlight a degree, as only to
" be perceived by a few perſons of moſt
" diſcerning judgement."

Again---" The grand ſecret of manag-
" ing an induſtrious flouriſhing ſtate, is
" to harmonize agriculture, commerce
" and manufactures; giving to each, fair
" ſcope and attention, and never exalting
" one to the *manifeſt detriment* of the other.
" The prince that ſhines in theſe reſpects,
" will do an honour to human nature, and

" his reign will be remembered by poſte-
" rity, like that of another Titus! A
" moſt illuſtrious Sovereign made this
" remark from his own experience: *The*
" *king's favour*, in matters of agriculture,
" *is as dew upon the graſs.* Prov. xix. 12."

And, ſurely, I may be permitted to add, without the imputation of flattery, that this remark was never more truly applicable, than to our own moſt gracious Sovereign; whoſe attention is extended, not only to the general welfare and proſperity of his kingdoms, but particularly to the promotion of the agricultural intereſt, by the wiſdom of his inſtitutions, and by the influence of his example; whoſe paternal care for the virtuous conduct, the wealth and happineſs of his ſubjects hath not hitherto proved ineffectual; and whoſe preſent lawful and laudable exertions, for the eſtabliſhment of laſting

peace

peace and increaſing plenty, will, it is to be hoped, under the protection and guidance of Providence, be crowned with ſucceſs.

As far, then, as is conſiſtent with the national welfare, let the landed intereſt be cheriſhed and indulged, but not to the increaſe of the burthens already caſt upon our other intereſts, and which, I am ſatisfied, are already charged with more than their juſt proportion. Let our agriculture, manufactures, trade, commerce and navigation go hand in hand as heretofore:---And, woe be to thoſe men and meaſures, which ſhall go to divide them, or favour the one at the expence of the other! They have been long cloſely united, and flouriſhed unremittingly under that ſyſtem of regulations to which they have been hitherto ſubject. Nor is there a rational hope, on their being ſeparated and conſidered as independent

on each other, that any increaſe can be expected in our wealth and happineſs as individuals, or in our proſperity and importance as a nation.

BEFORE this Chapter is drawn to a concluſion, it muſt be obſerved, that if tithes had really been capable of producing thoſe evil conſequences, which have been ſo greatly attributed to them of late years, it is very improbable, that the effect of them would have eſcaped the ſagacious penetration of the author of *The Political Survey of Great Britain*, who ſeems to have been more intimately acquainted with the internal reſources and natural intereſts of this kingdom, than any of his predeceſſors or ſucceſſors in the ſcience of our national economy. And---What is his opinion of the operation of tithes? What does he ſay, in relation to them? Not a word. And, if the recollection of the writer of this

this Eſſay does not fail, he hath not even hinted at the ſubject, throughout his long, laborious and important inveſtigation.

His abilities, ſpirit of enquiry, extent of information, depth of reſearch, and capacity of weighing the future as well as preſent conſequences of our internal regulations, appear in every page of his work: ſo that, it is next to an impoſſibility, that the ſubject ſhould have paſſed unnoticed by him; or, if he had entertained an idea of the payment of tithes being a political evil, that he could have avoided entering largely into the diſcuſſion of it,---more eſpecially, as his work is written profeſſedly for the purpoſe of inveſtigating our internal reſources, and the methods of their progreſſive improvement.

Nor, can it be ſaid, that he was reſtrained by the fear of diſturbing the public opinion, concerning the Eſtabliſhed Clergy and their ancient legal Revenue, becauſe

he hath given his ſentiments, without diſguiſe, in reſpect to every national improvement, which preſented itſelf to his comprehenſive mind, and frequently, in the courſe of his work, expreſſes his deteſtation of concealing his thoughts, or ſuffering himſelf to be conſtrained by prepoſſeſſions and partialities of any kind, or in favour of any particular perſons or intereſts. He ingenuouſly declares, that "A political writer, like an hiſtorian, "ſhould be free from all religious preju-"dices, and ſpeak his mind with freedom "and candour."

It muſt alſo be obſerved, that, though it be very common amongſt a peculiar claſs of people to talk, in relation to tithes, of the exaction and rapacity of the Clergy, forgetting that there are certain other perſons, called Impropriators, equally and probably much more attentive to their intereſt in the ſame concern, it may be aſked,

aſked,---Wherein conſiſts the exaction or rapacity of the Clergy, or even of the Impropriators? The law of the land hath defined the particular portion belonging to each of them:---And, if they are ſo diſpoſed, where is their exaction or rapacity in taking their full legal portion or inheritance in kind, or in receiving the value of it in money?

Indiſputably, it is not in the power of the united body of the Clergy and Impropriators to be guilty of the leaſt exaction or rapacity, in the collection of the incomes belonging to them; they cannot go beyond or defraud their brethren in the receipt of thoſe incomes; they have only this alternative, to receive them in kind, or a compoſition for them in money. And this latter mode of accommodation between the parties concerned, does commonly prevail throughout the kingdom, and is ſo far from being ſettled on the narrow

narrow and ſordid principles of exaction or rapacity, that tithes are compounded for in general, and on the average of ſcarcely more than a third part of their real value.

The propriety, neceſſity, and practicability of effecting an Abolition or Commutation of Tithes, may be ſtrongly doubted. Notwithſtanding various plans for ſuch purpoſes have been preſented to the public, they are every one of them ſo imperfect, as to be more or leſs ineffectual, or wholly impracticable, and are evidently liable to equal, if not more important objections, than the tithes they go to remove. And, even ſuppoſing the utility and practicability of an Abolition or Commutation of Tithes could be proved,--- Would it not be diſturbing the poſſeſſion of a property which hath been long conſtitutionally eſtabliſhed? --- And, Is not every infringement, change or innovation

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in the property of the Clergy, as unconſtitutional and unjuſtifiable, as an attempt to make any change or innovation in the property of any Corporate Body, or of any one Individual, who is legally poſſeſſed of it?

And, when it is conſidered, how many direct and indirect intereſts and contingencies are in connexion with, and dependent on, tithes, and in juſtice are to be conſulted and provided for, (and probably many of them in oppoſition to each other,) it is undeniable, that no one *General Plan* can ever comprehend them all, under an *adequate and equitable compenſation, at preſent and in future.* Beſides, it may reaſonably be queſtioned, whether the advantages, ſo ſpeciouſly holden up to view, and ſo eagerly contemplated by intereſted viſionaries, would or could flow from the adoption of either meaſure,---the Abolition or Commutation of Tithes. To a certainty,

certainty, the intereſts of the Clergy would be deeply injured:---And that injury might gradually reach unto Religion alſo, and eventually overthrow both Church and State.

It would have been no difficult taſk to have proceeded regularly, in the examination of the leſſer objections againſt the payment of Tithes. But the expoſing the futility of them would only ſerve to ſwell this Eſſay, already ſufficiently large, and much larger than was originally intended. If the more material and pointed objections have been ſhewn to be unfounded, the leſſer ones fall of courſe.

And it is preſumed, that enough hath been ſaid to prove, that the operation of Tithes is wholly inadequate to the effect which hath been aſſigned to it; as the high price of Corn cannot be truly aſcribed

cribed to the taking of Tithes in kind or by compoſition, but to many more obvious, juſt and effectual cauſes. And, ſince all landed property is and hath been bought or ſet, ſubject to the payment of Tithes, and on account of that outgoing at an inferior value:---Since land occupiers in general, throughout the kingdom, may and do compound for their Tithes, and, on the average, at a very low rate in compariſon of the real value of their groſs produce, and have it in their power, with few exceptions, to ſecure to themſelves the advantages reſulting from extra exertions and improvements, by ſettling a durable compoſition before hand, and under the ſanction of the act of the 2d and 3d of Edward the Sixth:---Since, under the preſent ſuppoſed impolitic and oppreſſive ſyſtem of payment of Tithes, the Agriculture, Population, Arts, Manufactures, Trade, Commerce, Navigation, Wealth

Wealth and Proſperity of this kingdom, have gradually advanced for many centuries paſt, and, in the laſt, have been moſt wonderfully and rapidly increaſed, are increaſing, and afford no rational proſpect of diminution:---Therefore, "The "Revenues of the Clergy, particularly "the part of them ariſing from Tithes, "are neither burthenſome to the Indi-"vidual, nor injurious to the Public."

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THE END.